



Maternity

Process

1. Applying for Maternity Leave

Maternity leave can begin at any time after the start of the 11th week before the week in which the baby is due to be born, the Expected Week of Childbirth (EWC).

2. Notice of intention to take Maternity Leave

In order to take advantage of the right to Ordinary and Additional Maternity leave, employees must give the College the proper notification.

An employee must notify the Human Resources Department no later than the end of the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth of:

- The fact that the employee is pregnant;
- The expected week of childbirth;
- And the date when the employee intends to start taking leave (in writing). This start date must be no earlier than the beginning of the 11th week before the EWC

The MatB1 certificate must be passed to the HR Department at least three weeks before the maternity leave is due to start.

The written notification of the intended start date of leave must be given to the Human Resources Department a **minimum of 28 days** before the intended start date.

If, due to unforeseen circumstances (e.g. illness), an employee is unable to provide the MatB1 certificate the College will allow them thirteen weeks to provide this. However, the College cannot pay College Occupational Maternity Pay or Statutory Maternity Pay until the certificate has been received.

If the required notification is not given within the specified time limits, the employee may lose both their right to SMP and to start maternity leave on their intended start date. The time limits can be extended only in exceptional circumstances where it was not reasonably practicable for the notification in question to have been given any earlier.

If the baby is born earlier than the date notified on the MatB1 (or before any notification has been given), maternity leave and pay will begin automatically, even if it is earlier than the eleventh week before the week in which the baby is due, the EWC. In order to preserve the employee's rights to maternity leave and SMP, the employee should notify the College in writing to the HR Department,

as soon as it is reasonably practicable, of the date of childbirth and, if applicable, that the MatB1 has not been submitted to HR.

It is assumed that the full 52 weeks leave will be taken, unless proper notification is given of an earlier return date.

3. Notification of intention to return from Maternity Leave

Employees may exercise the right to return to work at any time during the period of leave, except within the first 2 weeks of the leave.

Employees who intend to return to work at the end of their full maternity leave entitlement do not have to give any further notification to the College.

Unless otherwise notified, the date on which the employee returns to work will be:

- The first working day 52 weeks after the maternity leave began; or
- Within any longer leave period allowed on a voluntary or contractual basis by the College.

The appropriate date of return would have been notified to the employee within 28 days of their notification to the College of their intention to take maternity leave.

The College will write to the employee 12 weeks before their expected date of return reminding them of when they are due back and setting out the arrangements for their return to work.

If the employee intends to return to work before the date notified to them by the College, they must give 8 weeks' notice of their proposed date of return. This notice should be made in writing to the Human Resources Department.

If an employee attempts to return to work earlier than the end of the ordinary or additional leave without giving the College 8 weeks' notice, the College may postpone their return until the full 8 weeks' notice has been given. However, the College cannot postpone the employee's return date beyond the end of the full 52 weeks maternity leave period.

An employee whose return has been postponed under these circumstances is not entitled to receive wages or salary if they return to work during the period of postponement.

The only exception to these circumstances is if the College has not given appropriate notification to the employee, in writing, of when the maternity leave should end.

4. College notification of end of Maternity Leave

Once the notification has been correctly carried out as detailed above, the College must inform the employee of the date on which their leave will end. This should be done within 28 days of the employee's notification unless the start dates for the leave have changed.

5. Reintroduction to the Workplace

On return to work it is recommended that a meeting is arranged with the employee's line manager, who will be responsible for dealing with any housekeeping matters and ensuring that the employee settles in smoothly. It is also suggested on return to work that the manager and employee put in place a return to work plan. Suggestion for this may include:

arranging a catch-up meeting to update the employee on developments in their absence not previously notified to them, for example new members of staff and employee departures, technological developments and new or amended systems of work;

- Discussing the arrangements for handing work back;
- Arranging for the employee to meet with other work colleagues;
- Enabling them to re-familiarise themselves with the workload and the relevant systems of work;
- Discussing any internal or external training needs or requirements and ensure that these are addressed as soon as possible after the employee's return
- Introducing the employee to any new members of staff; and
- Discussing any other operational matters

Please also refer to the policy section on annual leave which might be useful with regards to providing a flexible return to work for a period of 3 months. Any such adjustments will always be made on the proviso that the employee must have fully returned to work within three months of their return date. It should be acknowledged where the employee has returned to work with the College's agreement on a part-time basis, in accordance with the College's Flexible Working Policy they should be given an appropriate workload for the number of hours being worked.

Further supporting information can be found through *Working Families* who have produced guides for parents and employers which provide tools, tips and advice for good working practices and which may help parents to enjoy the next phase of their life as a working parent.

The following links also have useful information for both parents and employers when returning to work as published by the National Childbirth Trust

Returning to work guide for parents:

<https://www.nct.org.uk/sites/default/files/ReturningToWork-Parents.pdf>

Returning to work guide for employers:

<https://www.nct.org.uk/sites/default/files/ReturningToWork-Employers.pdf>

6. Post Natal Arrangements

If an employee wishes to continue breastfeeding after returning to work, they should inform their line manager so that appropriate arrangements can be agreed and put in place regarding accommodation and regular breaks.

7. Individuals working on Research Grants

If an employee is paid from a research grant they or the Principal Investigator will need to inform the funder in addition to Research Finance and the Human Resources Department of their intention to take leave and the planned dates. Funder's rules vary in relation to suspension of grants, extension and payment during such leave so it is important that contact is made in sufficient time to allow for the appropriate actions to be taken. Where individuals are working on their own fellowships they will need to notify their funder directly in accordance with the terms of the award.

In the event that a grant is suspended, funding for maternity leave will be paid by an individual's employing Department.