

## PERSONNEL SERVICES

University Offices, Wellington Square, Oxford, OX1 2JD  
 Director of Human Resources



To heads of departments and institutions, faculty board chairmen,  
 departmental administrators and faculty board secretaries

Ref. EMS/5, EMS/6

22 January 2015

cc. heads of division, divisional secretaries, Director of Conference of  
 Colleges Secretariat, Mr Morgan, Ms Zaccheo, Mr Clive Shepherd

### Shared Parental Leave and Pay guidelines

*The government's introduction of new legislation will affect the University's family leave arrangements from April 2015.*

*The Shared Parental Leave Regulations 2014 and the Shared Parental Pay (General) Regulations 2015 enable eligible parents of babies due, or of children placed for adoption, on or after 5 April 2015 to share a period of leave and pay on the birth or adoption of their child.*

*Full details of the University's arrangements for the new scheme may be viewed at <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/during/family/spl/>.*

#### 1. Background

Under current arrangements eligible employees may take 52 weeks' maternity or adoption leave, of which the first 39 weeks are paid at the statutory rate and the remaining 13 weeks are unpaid. Employees may also qualify for the University's contractual scheme, under which the first 26 weeks of maternity leave are paid at the rate of normal full pay.

Partners of mothers or of primary adopters may currently take two weeks' fully-paid leave under the University's paternity scheme. Current arrangements also provide that if the mother/primary adopter returns to work before exhausting her entitlement to maternity leave and pay, the partner may use the outstanding leave, paid at whatever rate would have been paid to the mother, under arrangements called Additional Paternity Leave and Pay.

The new Shared Parental Leave (SPL) system provides greater flexibility in the way that parents may take leave. Personnel Services has developed guidelines, which follow the statutory provisions, with the exception of pay arrangements, which are more generous than the statutory minimum.

#### 2. The new arrangements

The new SPL and Shared Parental Pay (ShPP) system enables eligible parents to share a period of leave and pay in the first year following the birth or adoption of their child. It is entirely optional: the mother/primary adopter may continue to choose to take all of their entitlement to statutory maternity/adoption leave and pay. The fathers' right to the ordinary two-week paternity leave and pay period is also unaffected by the changes. The current provisions for Additional Paternity Leave (APL) and Additional Statutory Paternity Pay (ASPP), however, will be abolished following the introduction of the new system on 5 April 2015, and are replaced by SPL and ShPP.

In order for parents to qualify for SPL and ShPP, the mother/primary adopter must agree to end their maternity/adoption leave and pay period early. The remaining balance of that leave and



pay can then be converted into SPL and ShPP and be split between the parents as they see fit (with some provisos). The compulsory period of two weeks following the birth/adoption continues to apply and must be taken by the mother/primary adopter. After that, parents can share up to 50 weeks of leave and up to 37 weeks of statutory pay between them.

Employees who wish to take SPL and ShPP must provide relevant notices to their employing department in order to qualify.

#### *The University's contractual scheme*

Currently, where an employee opts to return to work after only 20 weeks' maternity or adoption leave, the University has a contractual Additional Paternity Pay scheme, where up to six weeks may be available to the father/partner at full pay rate.

The University will follow the same principle for ShPP. After the two-week compulsory maternity/adoption leave period following the birth or placement of the child, eligible parents may convert leave into SPL. Parents may then have up to 37 weeks' pay to share: with up to 24 paid at the rate of full pay and up to 13 at the statutory pay rate.

The cost of ShPP will be borne by the employee's department.

#### *CoreHR*

The HRIS and the Payroll teams are currently working on the necessary changes for recording SPL in Core. Once this has been finalised, the new process will be communicated to Core users via the monthly HRIS Bulletin. The relevant links to the Core process will be added into the main guidance on the Personnel Services website.

## **2. Briefing sessions**

Two briefing sessions, lasting one hour will take place on the following dates and locations:

Thursday, 5 February	2.30-3.30	Wolfson Seminar Room, Department of Chemistry, Mansfield Rd
Tuesday, 10 February	2.30-3.30	Room B, Wellcome Trust Centre for Human Genetics, Old Road Campus

Attendance at one of these sessions is encouraged. If you would like to attend this HR briefing on SPL, please contact Daniel Oliver at [Daniel.oliver@admin.ox.ac.uk](mailto:Daniel.oliver@admin.ox.ac.uk).

## **3. Action required of departments and divisions**

### **Departments are asked to:**

- i. note the new arrangements for SPL and ShPP, which are set out in full at <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/personnel/during/family/spl/>, and which come into effect immediately for parents whose babies are expected to be born or children placed for adoption on or after 5 April 2015;
- ii. book onto one of the briefings, if deemed helpful;



- iii. draw the new procedures to the attention of any line managers and staff who are involved in managing procedures related to family leave;
- iv. note the changes/updates to [maternity leave](#), [adoption leave](#), [paternity leave](#) and [unpaid parental leave](#) resulting from the introduction of SPL;
- v. seek advice from the relevant HR Business Partner if there are any unusual circumstances which are not covered in the guidance. The statutory provisions for SPL are complex and it is not possible to cover all possible scenarios in the guidance.
- vi. communicate and cascade as appropriate the new guidance to the rest of your department via your usual method of communication, eg via a noticeboard.

MR J DUXFIELD

Director of Human Resources