

Shared Parental Leave Guidance

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What is Shared Parental Leave?

Shared Parental Leave (SPL) is available for all eligible employees who become parents via birth or adoption. It allows both parents the flexibility to decide how to best care for their child during its first year with their family.

The regulations give parents the right to take SPL and place a duty with the University to ensure that employees are not penalised for using their entitlement or put under pressure to cancel/change a leave application.

The amount of leave available is calculated using the mother's entitlement to maternity/adoption leave, which allows them to take up to 52 weeks' leave. If they reduce their maternity/adoption leave entitlement then they and/or their partner may opt-in to the SPL system and take any remaining weeks as SPL. This means their partner could begin to take SPL while the mother is still on maternity/adoption leave.

SPL enables parents to share the caring responsibilities evenly or have one parent taking the main caring role, depending on their preferences and circumstances. Unlike maternity/adoption leave, eligible employees can stop and start their SPL and return to work between periods of leave with each eligible parent able to submit up to three notices booking periods of leave.

The Process

The process for applying and taking SPL initially appears complex. However, when broken down into the key stages (see page below) it is more manageable. The four stages are:

1. Becoming aware of a pregnancy or match;
2. Choosing SPL and notification of entitlement;

- 3. Applying for SPL;
- 4. Outcome.

STAGES	EMPLOYEE	INSTITUTION (HoD/Dep't	HR DIVISION
STAGE 1 Becoming aware of a pregnancy or match	Consider if SPL is suitable, what leave arrangements	IF AWARE: have informal discussions regarding all	
STAGE 2* Choosing SPL and providing notification of entitlement	Notify Institution of eligibility using a CHRIS75a	Acknowledge eligibility (letter a) and discuss initial intentions	IF AWARE: provide advice and guidance as necessary
STAGE 3 Applying for SPL	Notify Institution of leave application using a CHRIS75bgiving 8 weeks' notice.	<p>1. Continuous or straightforward request: agree SPL (letter b) within 14 days and forward CHRIS75b to HR within 14 days</p> <p>2. Discontinuous leave request: meet with the employee (letter c) to discuss request. Consider request and provide written outcome (letter d) within 14 days. If SPL is agreed, as 1 above.</p>	<p>1 Inputs SPL onto CHRIS to notify Payroll and formally grants leave</p> <p>2. Liaises with and advises the employee and Institution as necessary to aid discussions. If SPL is agreed, as 1 above.</p>
STAGE 4 Outcome	<p>1. Take granted</p> <p>2. Take granted SPL or withdraw request within 15</p>	Keep in touch with the employee as necessary	

Stage 1: becoming aware of a pregnancy or match

From the outset, employees are encouraged to consider what leave arrangements will work best for them and their family. This may involve consideration of:

- the family leave policies available to both parents from their respective employers (in cases where both parents do not work for the University);
- whether the mother is prepared to reduce their maternity/adoption leave;
- whether both parents are eligible for SPL;
- and how they would like to care for their child during its first year with their family.

Should an employee have any queries regarding the family leave available to them and their eligibility they should discuss this with their Head of Institution, Institution Administrator, line manager or HR Schools Team.

The family leave available to University employees are:

- Maternity Leave;
- Adoption Leave;
- Paternity/Co-Parent Leave;
- Shared Parental Leave;
- Graduated Return;
- Flexible Working;
- Parental Leave.

In the first instance, employees remain entitled to take maternity, adoption and paternity/co-parent leave before taking SPL. However, a mother may then choose to reduce their maternity/adoption leave and opt to transfer the remaining leave into SPL.

When can SPL start?

A birth mother or adopter must take a minimum of two weeks maternity/adoption leave directly following the birth or placement of the child but can then opt into SPL as soon as they wish.

When parents have not initially considered taking SPL, this option remains open to them for the duration of the maternity/adoption leave period provided that they are still eligible and give the required 8 weeks' notice. For example, 20 weeks into their maternity leave the mother may inform their employer that they intend to return to work after 30 weeks and allow their partner to take the remaining time as SPL.

SPL can:

- Start on any day of the week, but can only be taken in complete week blocks;
- Start for the partner when the mother is still on maternity/adoption leave;
- Be taken using up to three separate applications over the course of the SPL period.

Having early conversations about an employee's plans for family leave is encouraged as it will allow the Institution time to plan how the leave can be covered. However, it should be noted that SPL is a statutory right and, where an employee is eligible, as with maternity and adoption leave the dates requested as continuous leave must always be agreed.

Determining eligibility

To be eligible for SPL for one or both parents, the mother must:

- Have a partner;
- Be entitled to maternity/adoption leave or statutory maternity/adoption pay or maternity allowance;
- Have returned to work or given notice that they will be reducing their maternity/adoption leave.

A parent who intends to take SPL from the University must:

- Be an employee of the University;
- Share primary parental responsibility for the child with the other parent at the time of the birth/placement;
- Have given the University notice of their entitlement, including the necessary declarations and evidence (this can be done by completion of the CHRIS75a);
- Have been employed by the University for at least 26 weeks at the end of the 15th week before the child's expected due date/matching date and;
- Have worked for at least 26 weeks and earned an average of £30 a week in any 13 week period, in the 66 weeks leading up to the child's due date/matching date.

Stage 2: Opting into SPL and providing notification of entitlement.

An eligible employee must give their Institution notification of their entitlement and intention to take to SPL in writing at least eight weeks before they can take any period of SPL. They must also give their Institution notice if they are intending to claim ShPP. The CHRIS75a and CHRIS75b forms capture all the required information that an employee must provide under the Regulations.

The regulations specify that notice of entitlement must be in writing and include:

- The name of the employee;
- The name of the other parent;
- The start and end dates of any maternity/adoption leave or pay, or maternity allowance, taken in respect of the child;
- The total amount of SPL available;
- The child's expected date of birth, actual date of birth, or date of placement;
- The amount of SPL the employee and their partner each intend to take;
- A non-binding indication of when the employee expects to take the leave.

The employee must provide the University with a signed declaration stating:

- That they meet, or will meet, the eligibility conditions and are entitled to take SPL;
- That the information they have given is accurate;
- If they are not the mother/adopter they must confirm that they are either the father of the child or the spouse, civil partner or partner of the mother/adopter;
- That should they cease to be eligible they will immediately inform the University.

The employee must also provide the University with a signed declaration from their partner confirming:

- Their name, address and national insurance number (or a declaration that they do not have a national insurance number);
- That they are the mother/adopter of the child or they are the father of the child or are the spouse, civil partner or partner of the mother/adopter;
- That they satisfy the 'employment and earnings test' (see above), and had at the date of the child's birth or placement for adoption the main responsibility for the child, along with the employee;
- That they consent to the amount of SPL that the employee intends to take;
- That they consent to the University processing the information contained in the declaration form; and
- That they will immediately inform their partner should they cease to satisfy the eligibility conditions (in the case where the partner is the mother/adopter).

Where an employee is intending to claim ShPP they must also give their Institution notice which includes:

- How much ShPP both parents are entitled to take;
- How much ShPP each parent intends to take;
- When they expect to take ShPP and;
- A declaration from the employee's partner confirming their agreement to the employee claiming their amount of ShPP.

On receipt of a notification of entitlement (CHRIS75a) from an employee, the Head of Institution or Institution Administrator should acknowledge receipt using template letter a.

It is not necessary for the Institution to forward the CHRIS75a to the HR Division until an application for SPL (CHRIS75b) is also submitted (see Stage 3).

What if parents change their plans after they have provided their notice of eligibility?

Once a parent has given notice to end their maternity/adoption leave and either parent has informed their employer of their entitlement to take SPL, the notice is binding and cannot be withdrawn except in very specific circumstances:

- When notice was given before the birth of the child, it may be withdrawn without reason up to six weeks following the birth;
- Within eight weeks of the mother submitting their notice to end their maternity/adoption leave, it transpires that neither parent qualifies for SPL; or
- The mother/adopter's partner dies.

Where both parents are entitled to SPL they will have jointly informed their employers of how much SPL they each intend to take over the SPL period with their notice of entitlement. Parents are allowed to vary the way in which they distribute SPL between them at any stage providing they write to their employer specifying:

- The details of their original division of SPL;
- That they intend to change this division;
- How they now intend to take their SPL.

Both parents must sign this notice and confirm that they both agree to the change. If the leave has already been applied for and granted, the employee will also have to submit a SPL

variation notice (CHRIS75c) and this will count as one of their three permitted SPL applications.

Further evidence of eligibility

The regulations put the onus on the employee to check whether they are eligible for SPL and ShPP. Therefore, SPL should be granted based on the information and declarations provided by the employee as they constitute sufficient evidence to do so.

However, in exceptional circumstances, the Institution may, within 14 days of a SPL notice of entitlement being received, request:

- The name and business address of the partner's employer (where the employee's partner is no longer employed or is self-employed their contact details must be given instead)
- In the case of biological parents, a copy of the child's birth certificate (or, where one has not been issued, a MATB1 or equivalent).
- In the case of an adopted child, documentary evidence of the name and address of the adoption agency, the date on which they were notified of having been matched with the child and the date on which the agency expects to place the child for adoption

In order to be entitled to SPL, the employee must produce this information within 14 days of the request. However, it is advised that, in circumstances where an Institution feels that this additional evidence is necessary, they contact their HR Schools Team in the first instance.

In turn, if an Institution is approached by another employer for information regarding an individual's eligibility for SPL the Institution should ensure that their response is given in a timely manner, consistent with data protection obligations and duty of confidentiality. Institutions are advised to contact their HR Schools Team if they have any concerns about the information they are being asked to provide.

Stage 3: applying for SPL

Once an employee has notified their Institution of their entitlement to SPL and, if applicable, ShPP using a CHRIS75a, they must apply to take any leave using a CHRIS75b. Applications to take leave can be given at the same time as the notice of entitlement.

Eligible employees have the right to submit up to three applications for periods of SPL within the SPL period. This means that an employee may apply for three separate periods of SPL during their child's first year in the family.

Each application may contain either a single period of weeks of leave; or two or more weeks of discontinuous leave, where the employee intends to return to work between periods of leave.

The employee must apply for SPL via a CHRIS 75b at least eight weeks before the date on which they wish to start the leave and, if applicable, receive ShPP.

The Institution should forward the completed CHRIS75a and CHRIS75b to their HR Schools Team as soon as possible following any discussions necessary (see discontinuous leave below) in order that the leave can be formally granted and entered onto the HR System.
Continuous leave

Continuous leave is a period of SPL that is taken in one block e.g. four weeks' leave. An application for continuous leave cannot be refused therefore Institutions will need to consider how they will cover the employee's absence.

It is not a legal requirement to hold a meeting to discuss arrangements for a period of continuous leave. However, as with any period of extended leave employees and managers may find it beneficial to meet to discuss the upcoming leave, cover provisions, plans to keep in touch and any hand over of work.

Discontinuous Leave

Discontinuous leave is a period of SPL arranged around weeks where the employee will return to work e.g. where an employee works every other week for a period of three months.

Institutions do not have to agree to a period of discontinuous leave. When a period of discontinuous leave is requested the Head of Institution or Institution Administrator has 14 calendar days to discuss the application with the employee and consider whether the pattern of leave requested is manageable. For example:

- What will the impact of the leave pattern be on the Institution?
- Is there an alternate pattern of leave which would be more manageable?
- What is the likely outcome should the leave not be agreed?

Where there is concern over accommodating the request, the Institution or the employee may seek to arrange a meeting to discuss the application with a view to agreeing an arrangement that meets both the needs of the employee and the Institution (template letter c).

Where a meeting is arranged it should take place in private and be held well in advance of the requested SPL start date. If the initial date is problematic then a second date will be offered. If an alternative date cannot be arranged then the meeting may be held over the telephone or via video call.

At the meeting the employee may, if they wish, be accompanied by a workplace colleague or trade union representative.

The purpose of the meeting is to discuss in detail the discontinuous leave pattern requested and what will happen while the employee is away from work. The discussion may also focus on how the leave proposal could be agreed, whether a modified arrangement would be agreeable to the employee and the Institution, and what the outcome may be if no agreement is reached.

The Institution will consider a discontinuous leave application but has the right to refuse it. If the leave pattern is refused, the employee can either withdraw their application within 15 days of giving it, or can take the leave in a single continuous block starting on the start date requested (see Stage 4 section C, below).

Stage 4: Outcome

There are three possible outcomes following a SPL application:

A: unconditionally accept a SPL application and leave is granted

As outlined above, an application for continuous leave must be granted, therefore applications for continuous leave should be passed to the relevant HR Schools Team as soon as possible.

If a discontinuous leave application is made that is acceptable to the Institution, then it is reasonable to simply grant the leave by passing the application to the relevant HR Schools Team as soon as possible.

The University is required to respond to an application for SPL within 14 days of receipt which is why it is important for Heads of Institution, Institution Administrators and line managers to consider SPL applications as soon as possible and write to the employee agreeing to their leave (template letter b) in addition to forwarding the applications to HR.

B: confirm an agreed modification to a discontinuous leave application

If, when the Head of Institution or Institute Administrator meets with the employee, they are able to agree to an alternate discontinuous leave pattern than the one originally requested, this should be confirmed in writing within 14 days of the original application being received (template letter d).

There is no need for the employee to change their original application as the details of the new pattern should be outlined in the letter. A change to a leave application in these circumstances will not count as an additional application against the three permitted.

The CHRIS75a, CHRIS75b and letter d should then be forwarded to HR.

C: refusal of a discontinuous leave application

If following a meeting to discuss an application for discontinuous leave the Head of Institution, Institution Administrator or line manager does not feel able to agree to the pattern requested they should write to the employee immediately outlining their decision (template letter e). The decision must be given to the employee within 14 days of their application being made.

The decision letter must include:

- Confirmation of the refusal of the original pattern requested;
- Any proposed alternate pattern of discontinuous leave for the employee to consider;
- Information on the default provisions.

The default provisions specify that, unless the employee advises the Head of Institution within 15 days of their initial application that their request is withdrawn, the total amount of leave requested will automatically become a continuous block of SPL starting on the date originally requested. If the employee would like the continuous period to begin on a different date they must inform the Head of Institution within 19 days of their original application. However, the start date cannot be sooner than eight weeks from the date of the original application.

Pay during SPL

Statutory SPL Pay (ShPP)

A mother, who meets the eligibility criteria, is entitled to statutory maternity/adoption pay or maternity allowance for up to 39 weeks. If the mother has given notice that they wish to curtail their maternity/adoption leave and opt into SPL before they have received all of their 39 weeks statutory pay then any remaining weeks could become payable as SShP.

The weekly rate of ShPP is set by the Government and mirrors the rate of statutory maternity/adoption pay and maternity allowance.

If both parents are eligible to receive ShPP they need to decide who is going to receive it, and when, and inform their respective employers. For employees of the University, this information is captured on the CHRIS75a and CHRIS75b.

Enhanced SPL Pay (EShPP)

University employees are entitled to 26 weeks SPL at full pay, minus any enhanced maternity/adoption or paternity pay they have already received.

For example, a new father employed by the University is eligible to SPL. Their partner curtails their maternity leave after 26 weeks, so the father is entitled to take 26 weeks SPL. As the father has already taken 4 weeks paternity leave at full pay, he is therefore entitled to 22 weeks SPL at full pay.

EShPP is comprised of a contractual SPL pay provision and any Statutory SPL Pay (ShPP) to which the employee is entitled. If the amount due is less than the ShPP provision, only ShPP will be payable. The amount payable cannot be more than the employee's usual weekly earnings.

An employee may opt to hold over the 26 weeks EShPP that is in excess of their statutory entitlement and receive this pay in full once they have returned to work for a period of three months.

EShPP is subject to the condition that no work is undertaken during the paid period of leave other than 'SPL in touch days' (see 'Communication during SPL, SPLIT days' below).

Payment will normally be made through the payroll on the employee's normal pay date.

Where an employee does not return to work for a minimum of three months after a period of SPL they will be required to repay any EShPP that they have received (see 'Return to Work, Repayment' below).

Changes to granted SPL

Once a period of SPL has been granted, any variation or cancellation of the leave will count as one of the employee's three permitted applications.

Where possible, eight weeks' notice must be given of any variation or cancellation to a period of granted SPL using a CHRIS75c. Should eight weeks' notice not be possible the Head of Institution/Institution Administrator is under no obligation to agree to the change but could still consider the request and determine whether it is reasonably practical to grant it.

However, a change that is as a result of a child being born early, or as a result of the Institution requesting it be changed, and the employee being agreeable to the change, will not count as a further application.

Benefits during leave

During Shared Parental Leave the contract of employment continues in force. All terms and conditions of the contract continue with the exception of stipend or salary. Continuity of service is maintained, and any standard incremental progression taking place during the Shared Parental Leave will be implemented.

Annual leave accrual

Annual leave entitlement, as stated in the relevant contract of employment, will continue to accrue as normal for the entire period of Shared Parental Leave. All accrued annual leave must be taken within three months of returning to work following Shared Parental Leave.

Effect on sabbatical leave

For academic staff with an entitlement to leave under Special Ordinance C (i) 1., all terms on Shared Parental Leave are counted as reckonable service for sabbatical leave purposes.

Pension Implications

For members of both the USS and the CPS during any period of paid Shared Parental Leave, pension benefits are accrued as if the member is at work. The following paragraphs give general information about the procedures operating in the two pension schemes available to staff in the University. However, this does not cover all individual circumstances and any member of staff who has queries on their pension entitlement should contact the Pensions Office for information.

For members of USS, contributions are maintained in full for any period when the member is in receipt of any pay. The member's contributions during this period are based on their actual income and any shortfall is made up by the University. A member of USS on unpaid leave is treated as being on suspended membership of the scheme and does not receive any service credits. On their return they may, if they wish, buy in this service by paying both employer and employee contributions.

For members of CPS, contributions are paid based on the salary actually received. When a member goes on unpaid leave they cease to accrue service for the period of that leave. On their return they may buy in the missing service and are required to pay only the employee's contributions.

Communication during SPL

Before an employee's SPL begins, the Head of Institution, Institution Administrator or line manager and the employee should discuss arrangements for keeping in touch during their leave. Such contact can be beneficial to both the Institution and the employee.

It is reasonable for the Institution to contact the employee during their SPL to:

- Discuss the employee's plans to return to work;
- Any statutory consultation required, for example the end of a fixed term contract;
- Ensure the individual is aware of any possible promotion opportunities;
- Discuss any special arrangements to be made or training to be given to ease their return to work; or
- Simply to update them on developments at work during their absence.

Whether such contact is done through a SPLIT day or via some other pre-arranged method is something for both parties to consider.

Shared Parental Leave in Touch (SPLIT) days

An employee can agree to work for the University (or attend training) for up to 20 days during Shared Parental Leave without bringing their period of Shared Parental Leave to an end or impacting on their right to claim ShPP for that week. These are known as "Shared Parental Leave In Touch" or "SPLIT" days. Any work carried out on a day or part of a day shall constitute a day's work for these purposes. SPLIT days are in addition to any KIT days that the mother/adopter may have taken during their maternity/adoption leave.

The University has no right to require an employee to carry out any work and is under no obligation to offer an employee any work, during the employee's SPL. Any work undertaken is a matter for agreement between the Institution and the employee.

An employee, with the agreement of the organisation, may use SPLIT days to work part of a week during SPL. The Institution and the employee may use SPLIT days to effect a gradual return to work by the employee towards the end of a long period of Shared Parental Leave or to trial a possible flexible working pattern.

Payment of SPLIT days

An employee will receive full pay (at the appropriate rate according to their salary spine point), inclusive of ShPP, for the hours worked during a SPLIT day. Therefore, any payment made depends on when during Shared Parental Leave the SPLIT day is worked, as follows:

During the EShPP period	Unpaid
During the ShPP period	Paid for the hours worked less any ShPP for that day.
During nil pay	Full pay for the hours worked.

Alternatively, an employee may choose to take 'time off in lieu' (TOIL) instead of payment for hours worked. Therefore, an employee who takes a SPLIT day may choose to receive no additional payment for that day beyond their ShPP but instead choose to gain an additional annual leave to be taken after their return to work (e.g. if they work 4 hours on a SPLIT day, they gain 4 hours).

Return to work after SPL

When an employee returns to work after taking SPL they are entitled to return to the same job if their combined period of leave (made up of any maternity/adoption/paternity/co-parent and SPL) totalled 26 weeks or less.

If they have taken a combined period of leave of more than 26 weeks the University will allow an employee to return to the same role unless it is not reasonably practicable, in which case they must be offered a suitable alternative role, on the same terms and conditions as their substantive post.

Statutory entitlements on return to work:

- Emergency leave: all employees have a statutory right to short periods of unpaid leave in order to make arrangements to deal with family emergencies. In addition to this statutory provision Heads of Institution have discretion to grant compassionate leave where circumstances justify so doing;
- Parental leave: employees who have a year's service have a statutory right to parental leave.
- Flexible working: all employees have a statutory right to apply to work flexibly.

Contractual entitlements on return to work:

- Graduated Return;
- Returning Carers Scheme.

Non-return to work

If an employee is unable to return to work at the end of their SPL leave because they are medically unfit, they should report the sickness absence and submit medical certification in the usual way. They will transfer from SPL to sick leave. Subsequently, normal sickness procedures will be followed.

If an employee does not return to work following a period of SPL, their job remains open and they do not automatically lose their right to return. However, their absence will be treated as unauthorised absence under the University's disciplinary policies for that category of staff.

Repayment

If an employee decides not to return to work after taking SPL, or returns to work but subsequently decides not to continue in the employment of the University for a period of at least three months, the University has the right to reclaim any EShPP that they received that is in excess of any ShPP that they have received.

If an employee returns to work but subsequently chooses not to continue in employment for a period of at least three months, the amount deducted will be a proportion of the excess pay as follows:

Up to one month	All EShPP
One month up to two months	Two-thirds of EShPP
Two months up to three months	One-third of EShPP

In exercising this right to reclaim pay, the University will take into account personal circumstances.

Fixed term and open ended contracts and SPL

If an employee is on Shared Parental Leave when their contract is due to cease, the Procedures for Ending Fixed Term Contracts must be followed. In these circumstances the relevant HR Business Partnering team can be contacted in advance of the contract end date for guidance on the consultation process.

If an employee's contract comes to an end during a period of SPL, any EShPP will cease with effect from their last day of service. However, any remaining ShPP to which they are entitled will usually remain payable via the University Payroll, unless they start working for a new employer.

Cover during SPL

As with any period of extended leave it is important for the Institution to plan how the employee's absence on SPL will be covered. It is usually beneficial to do this in conjunction with the employee before they start their leave.

It may be possible to offer a development opportunity to another employee by asking them to cover the duties of the employee on SPL. If an employee is asked to cover duties at a higher level than their substantive post, an additional responsibility payment may be appropriate. It may also be possible to seek funding from the relevant body for a temporary appointment at a lower level.

Any person temporarily appointed to cover for SPL will have a clause in their contract stating that the contract will end on the return or resignation of the employee on leave.

Alternatively, if possible, the work of the employee on SPL may be redistributed among existing employees.

Funding

- For academic staff, substitute teaching funds may be provided. There is no provision for cover for the administrative or other non-teaching duties of a UTO.
- For assistant staff posts funded by central University funds and for academic-related staff, [funding may be sought for a temporary appointment](#) from the relevant school (Resource Management Committee for non-school institutions).
- For contract research staff, the sponsor bears the cost of any substitute cover.

External Sponsors

Where a position is funded by an external sponsor, it is the responsibility of the Head of Institution to inform the sponsor that the employee is taking SPL. The sponsor's SPL provision should be checked, for example, whether they would provide additional funding to make a substitute appointment to compensate for the whole, or part, of a period of paid SPL, or to extend the duration of a grant for a period of leave equivalent to the SPL taken by employee so that the project may be completed.

Glossary

Mother: in this document 'mother' refers to either the biological mother who gives birth to the child or the primary adopter who is eligible for adoption leave and pay.

Partner: the child's biological father or the partner of the mother/adopter. This can be spouse, civil partner, or a partner who is living in an enduring relationship with the mother and will have parental responsibility for the child.

Match: when an adopter is approved to adopt a named child/children.

SPL: Shared Parental Leave.

SPL period: the total weeks available as SPL up to the child's first birthday/anniversary of adoption following the mothers return to work/notice to curtail their maternity leave.

ShPP: Statutory Shared Parental Leave Pay.

EShPP: Enhanced Shared Parental Leave Pay. This is an occupational paid benefit provided by the University to its eligible employees.

SPLIT day: Shared Parental Leave In Touch day. See the University Shared Parental Leave Policy for more details.

Examples

Example 1: Where the employee is the mother/adopter

The employee chooses to end their maternity/adoption leave after 18 weeks, leaving 34 weeks (of the total 52 week entitlement) available for SPL. If both the employee and her partner are eligible, they can share the 34 weeks. They can take the leave at the same time or separately, e.g.:

- a. After taking 18 weeks maternity leave, both the employee and their partner spend 17 weeks SPL at home caring for their baby together.
- b. After taking 18 weeks maternity leave the employee chooses to return to work whilst their partner takes 10 weeks SPL to care for the baby. After this time, the employee takes the remaining 24 weeks SPL as a continuous block.

Example 2: Where the employee is the partner

- a. The mother/adopter notifies that they will end their maternity/adoption leave after 27 weeks, leaving 25 weeks of the total 52 week entitlement) available for SPL. The employee takes 2 weeks paternity/co-parent leave and then spends the remaining weeks SPL at home with the mother/adopter caring for their baby together.
- b. The mother/adopter returns to work after taking the minimum 2 weeks maternity/adoption leave. The employee takes 2 weeks paternity leave and then 50 weeks SPL to care for their baby whilst the mother/adopter returns to work.

Example 3: Where the employee wishes to take discontinuous leave

The employee ends their maternity/adoption leave after 20 weeks, leaving 32 weeks (of the total 52 week entitlement) available for SPL. The employee applies for 32 weeks of discontinuous leave, working every other week, using up 16 weeks SPL.

- a. The Institution is happy with this arrangement and the SPL is granted.
- b. After meeting with the employee, the Institution offers an alternate arrangement where the employee works 2 weeks on 2 weeks off over the SPL period. The employee agrees.
- c. After meeting with the employee, the Institution declines the request for discontinuous leave and the employee takes 16 weeks' SPL as a continuous block at a later date instead.
- d. After meeting with the employee, the Institution declines the request for discontinuous leave and the employee withdraws their request for SPL.