**ADOPTION LEAVE FAQS**

The following information summarises the key points in relation to Adoption Leave at Queen’s University. These should be read in conjunction with the Adoption Leave Policy which can be viewed [here.](https://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/HumanResources/DiversityandInclusionUnit/PoliciesandProcedures/WorkLifeBalancePoliciesApplicationForms/#d.en.759334)

**WHO IS ELIGIBLE?**

* Staff members who have been newly matched with a child for adoption by an approved adoption agency.
* Have worked continuously for the University for at least 26 weeks ending with the week in which he/she is notified of being matched.
* Their contract covers entire period of adoptive leave.
* Only one member of a couple who adopt jointly is entitled to adoption leave. 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 paid paternity leave.

**WHAT IS THE LEAVE ENTITLEMENT?**Eligible staff members are entitled to up to 52 weeks continuous leave, same as maternity leave. The first 26-week period is Ordinary Adoption leave (OAL) and the remaining 26 weeks is Additional Adoption Leave (AAL).

**WHAT IF MORE THAN ONE CHILD IS PLACED AT THE SAME TIME?**Only one period of adoption leave is available irrespective of whether more than one child is placed for adoption as part of the same arrangement.

**WHAT IS THE PAY ENTITLEMENT?**Queen’s offers enhanced adoption pay that goes beyond statutory adoption pay.Weeks 1-18 are full pay, weeks 19-39, lower rate Statutory Adoption Pay and weeks 40-52 unpaid.

**HOW MUCH NOTICE IS REQUIRED TO TAKE ADOPTION LEAVE?**A member of staff must inform the University, no later than 7 days of being notified by the adoption agency, that he/she has been matched with a child for adoption (unless this is not reasonably practicable).

**CAN YOU TAKE TIME OFF FOR PRE-ADOPTION MEETINGS?**Yes, a prospective adoptive parent can have reasonable time off to attend pre-adoption interviews. They must notify their department in advance of such interviews.

**WHEN DOES ADOPTION LEAVE COMMENCE?**OAL will normally commence on the date of the child’s placement or a fixed date up to 14 days before the expected date of placement. AAL commences immediately after OAL.

**CAN THE START DATE BE CHANGED?**Yes, a member of staff may change their mind about when they want to start their OAL by giving at least 28 days’ notice to HR/Head of School (unless this is not reasonably practical to do so).

**DO YOU ACCRUE ANNUAL LEAVE ON ADOPTION LEAVE?**Yes, they accrue annual leave. If they are unable to take it in one particular leave year due to Adoption Leave, they can carry over the full complement of leave (42 days) to the next leave year, and schedule it in agreement with their Head of School/Department.

**WHAT ABOUT PENSION CONTRIBUTIONS?**Pensionable service will continue to accrue as normal as long as the member of staff is receiving salary or Statutory Adoption Pay. As week 40 of adoptive leave onwards is unpaid, they will not normally be able to make pension contributions for this period.

**WHAT ABOUT KEEPING IN TOUCH (KIT) DAYS?**Employee can have up to 10 days without loss of SAP and without triggering return to work.

**WHAT IF THE PLACEMENT ENDS?**If the child’s placement ends during the adoption leave period, the member of staff will be able to continue adoption leave for up to eight weeks after the end of the placement.

**RETURNING TO WORK**

* A member of staff can alter their original return date, at least 8 weeks written notice must be given to the University of the amended return to work date.
* After OAL a member of staff is entitled to return to the job in which he/she was employed before his/her absence under the original contract of employment and on terms and conditions not less favourable than those, which he/she would have received had he/she not been absent*.*
* After AAL if it is not possible to return to the original job, they should be offered another job with equivalent terms and conditions,

**HOW TO APPLY?**

* Adoption leave notification forms are available on the Diversity and Inclusion Unit website [here.](https://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/HumanResources/DiversityandInclusionUnit/PoliciesandProcedures/WorkLifeBalancePoliciesApplicationForms/%22%20%5Cl%20%22d.en.759334)
* A Matching Certificate, or confirmation letter from Social Services (in the case of Fostering to Adopt) is required to be submitted at the same time or as soon as possible thereafter. Paid adoption leave can only be authorised once this has been received.
* The member of staff must also inform his/her Head of School/Department/ Unit of his/her adoption leave arrangements.
* HR should send a confirmation letter within 28 days of receiving notification form.