



# UICI



### **3 Supporting working parents and carers:**



## Parental leave policies at UCL

Maternity Leave and Adoption Leave – allows for 18 weeks leave on full pay and statutory maternity pay for those who qualify, regardless of length of service or funding source. Staff can take up to 52 weeks leave. [ucl.ac.uk/hr/docs/parental-leave.php](https://ucl.ac.uk/hr/docs/parental-leave.php) Please also see the maternity leave FAQs - [ucl.ac.uk/hr/docs/maternity\\_faqs.php](https://ucl.ac.uk/hr/docs/maternity_faqs.php)

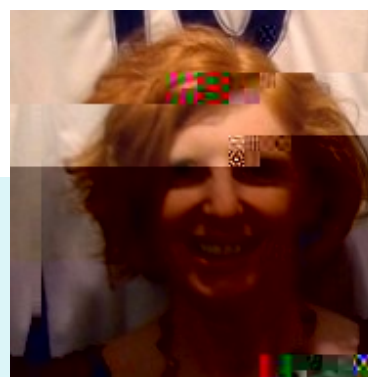
Shared Parental Leave – allows parents to share up to 50 weeks leave between them, taking leave in up to 3 blocks, either alternatively or concurrently. UCL offers 18 weeks leave on full pay and statutory shared parental leave pay for those who qualify regardless of length of service or funding source. [ucl.ac.uk/hr/docs/parental-leave.php](https://ucl.ac.uk/hr/docs/parental-leave.php) Please also see the shared parental leave FAQs - [ucl.ac.uk/hr/docs/shpl\\_faqs.php](https://ucl.ac.uk/hr/docs/shpl_faqs.php)

## Flexible working at UCL

Right to request flexible working – any member of staff – whether they have caring commitments or not – can request flexible working arrangements. Any request must be given serious consideration by your line manager.

### Case Study 2 - Flexible Working

I am lead of UCL Medical School's Medical Ethics and Law Unit and academic lead of the Medical School's widening participation project. I am also a practicing clinician in Sexual and Reproductive Health and have three kids under the age of thirteen. Balancing work and childcare responsibilities can be a tricky business. Fortunately, UCL's flexible working policy allows me to adjust my work time around family commitments. This means I can take a couple of hours out of my working day to see a school concert or accompany my daughter to the dentist and make up the time during evenings or weekends when my partner Nicola can look after the kids. Moreover, the general positive and supportive attitude towards members of staff with dependents that permeates my department means that I don't feel guilty watching my 9 year old murder her school's X Factor concert while my colleagues are hard at work.



Dr Jayne Kavanagh  
Principal Clinical Teaching Fellow, UCL Medical School

### **UCL Parents and Carers Together Network (PACT):**

PACT is a peer support group for all UCL staff balancing caring responsibilities with work. PACT aims to:

Address issues commonly faced by parents and carers

Provide a supportive environment for discussion, networking and informal advice.

Raise awareness of UCL policies that support parents and carers

The group holds monthly sessions and topics have included effective time management, caring for elderly relatives and flexible working, along with Christmas and summer social events. There is also an online Moodle forum so tips and strategies can be exchanged virtually.





UCL Day Nursery – UCL has a day nursery which can accommodate up to 62 children between the ages of 3 months and 5 years [ucl.ac.uk/current-students/support/wellbeing/day\\_nursery](https://ucl.ac.uk/current-students/support/wellbeing/day_nursery)

Employee Assistance Programme – an external employee support service that is free to UCL staff, which gives advice and counselling on a number of issues, including wellbeing and workplace issues [ucl.ac.uk/hr/occ\\_health/services/emp\\_assistance\\_program.php](https://ucl.ac.uk/hr/occ_health/services/emp_assistance_program.php)

Remote working – UCL has a remote access VPN service to enable staff to connect in UCL's IT systems from off-site locations. Access to VPN is restricted so staff will need their manager's permission to use the service [ucl.ac.uk/isd/services/get-connected/remote-working/vpn](https://ucl.ac.uk/isd/services/get-connected/remote-working/vpn)

In addition, desktop@UCL Anywhere allows you to access your applications, files and desktop from your own computer or device [ucl.ac.uk/isd/services/desktops/](https://ucl.ac.uk/isd/services/desktops/)

Childcare vouchers – UCL operates a salary sacrifice childcare voucher scheme to make the cost of childcare more affordable [ucl.ac.uk/hr/docs/childcare\\_voucher\\_scheme.php](https://ucl.ac.uk/hr/docs/childcare_voucher_scheme.php)

Specialist human resources advice – for advice on individual workplace issues staff can contact the HR Consultant for their area [ucl.ac.uk/hr/consultancy/index.php](https://ucl.ac.uk/hr/consultancy/index.php)

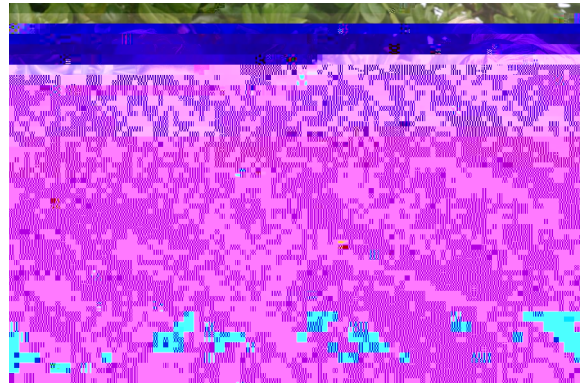
Equalities and Diversity Team – for advice on diversity-related matters, such as gender equality issues, contact [equalities@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:equalities@ucl.ac.uk)

10 Supporting working parents and carers: guidance for managers

Accept that staff will have fluctuating time and energy levels at different stages in their careers – be mindful of the impact of people’s lives outside work, where you are aware of this, and look to make realistic demands of them.

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Don’t assume they are less interested in their work. Just because, for example, a woman has recently returned from maternity leave and is excited about her family it doesn’t mean that she is any less interested in her work or ambitc



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### Case Study 6 - Dual academic career parents

I have been working in academia for well over 20 years, having had different positions at several European universities. At one of them I met my husband and now we both work at UCL. Working as a university lecturer is a tough job full of real responsibilities and very high expectations. Research is genuinely a continuous process occupying your mind far beyond "nine-to-five". However, it is portable - you can take it with you whilst waiting for your child to finish his tennis practice for example. It can also sometimes be paused whilst you go and pick up your child from school.

Our son is 7 years old. Somebody has to take him to school in the morning and pick him up from after-school club before it closes at 6pm. On days when we are both at UCL, my husband and I do "shifts". The one who picks him up from the after-school club leaves home very early in the morning in order to be back by 6pm, whilst the one who is taking him to school comes back late, but preferably in time for family dinner at 7pm. Early morning is time for homework, whilst 7-9pm is family time after which at least one of us is back at the computer working. We are lucky to be able to organise our shifts as my husband's teaching is in the morning, whilst mine is in the afternoon.

Case Study 7 - Part-

Netmums is the UK's fastest growing online parenting organisation  
[netmums.com/](https://netmums.com/)

Mumsnet [mumsnet.com](https://mumsnet.com) offers parents a place to swap ideas and advice.

Dad info [dad.info/](https://dad.info/) news, information and blogs

[childcare.co.uk/](https://childcare.co.uk/) is an award winning online social networking platform for parents, childcare providers and private tutors with over 1,000,000 members

[carersuk.org](https://carersuk.org) provide information and advice about caring alongside practical and emotional support for carers

ACAS leaflet: 'The right to apply for flexible working' - a short guide for employers, working parents and carers

[acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=803](https://acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=803)

Family and Childcare Trust aims to make the UK a better place for families, through research, campaigning and information provision, and working with





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[www.ucl.ac.uk/hr/equalities](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/hr/equalities)