



GUIDE FOR STAFF RETURNING TO WORK FROM PARENTAL AND ADOPTION LEAVE



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Preparing to return to work following Parental and Adoption Leave

This Guide provides information to staff returning to work from a period of parental and adoption leave. Supervisors should refer to the *Supervisors Guide to Supporting Staff Return to Work From Parental Leave* for information on how they can best support staff returning from a period of parental or adoption leave.



Preparing for parental and adoption leave

To keep communication open, it is recommended that you schedule some time to discuss with your supervisor, prior to going on leave, your likely date of return to work, your anticipated work pattern when returning to work and whether you would like to access keeping in touch days and how you would like to do so while on parental and adoption leave. This discussion is not anticipated to lead to a formally agreed arrangement but is part of an ongoing discussion with your supervisor. It is understood that this initial conversation is part of an ongoing conversation, and your return to work plan may change. The purpose of commencing these discussions early is to ensure that you are supported in the best way possible by the University if you chose to return to work following a period of parental or adoption leave.

Keeping in touch while on parental and adoption leave

If you would like to keep in touch while on parental and adoption leave, you should discuss this with your supervisor. You may commence this discussion prior to going on leave, and you may like to discuss your preferred method of communication and how often you would like to keep in touch, in accordance with the **Parental Leave Procedures**.

Keeping in touch days are voluntary and are provided for genuine work activities, such as training, to become familiar with new or updated processes, and participating in planning meetings or discussions that may impact your role.

More information can be found in the **UQ Parental Leave Procedure**.



Returning to work

You are entitled to return to your substantive position following a period of parental or adoption leave. More information about this can be found in the **Parental Leave procedure**.

There are a number of flexible work options, facilities and support networks available to you upon your return to work. More information about these can be found below and in the **Flexible Working Arrangements policy**.

Your supervisor will be able to provide further information about the flexible work arrangements, facilities and support available to you on your return to work.

Flexible work arrangements

The University provides a number of **different options** to cater for the individual needs of staff members. These options can be discussed, and where appropriate current working arrangements may be adjusted, to suit all parties. Flexibility makes it easier for staff to accept and meet personal, family or carer obligations while maintaining career progression and workplace satisfaction.

Under the **National Employment Standards (2013) in the Fair Work Act (2009)**, you have the right to request flexible work arrangements in certain circumstances where you are the parent, or have responsibility for the care of a child who is of school age or younger. Requests for flexible work arrangements can only be refused on the basis of reasonable business grounds.

Flexible work arrangements refer to changes in hours of work (e.g. reduction in hours worked, changes to start/finish times), changes in patterns of work (e.g. working 'split-shifts' or job sharing arrangements) and changes in location of work (e.g. working from home or another location).

For more information about the flexible work arrangements available at UQ, and how to apply, please see the **Flexible working arrangements policy**.

Parking permits

If you drive to work there are a number of different options available to you upon your return to work.

Returning to work with an existing parking permit

If you have a parking permit prior to going on parental and adoption leave you should return your parking permit, with the letter you received from HR confirming your parental or adoption leave, to **Property and Facilities (P&F)**. P&F will record that you are going on parental and adoption leave in their files and place your permit on hold. This will ensure that you will not need to go on a waiting list for a parking permit when you return to work.

If you choose to return to work, either full-time or on a flexible work arrangement which is a reduction of hours to a part-time work pattern, then you are able to change your existing parking permit to a **part-time parking permit** without having to go on a waiting list.

You should contact P&F two-to-three weeks prior to returning to work to reapply for your parking permit on either a full-time (if this was your previous arrangement) or part-time (if you are choosing to return to work on a part-time) basis. They will process your application and send your permit to your home address so that you will be able to use it on your first day back at work.

If you change your work pattern from part-time to full-time, you may need to go on a waiting list for an available full-time parking permit.

More information about parking at UQ can be found [here](#).

Special needs permits

Pregnant staff

At St Lucia and Herston, staff who are pregnant and have a current annual Staff Undercover parking permit, may – at no additional cost – upgrade their permit to a special needs permit that allows more flexibility in their parking options from the time they are 16 weeks pregnant until they depart on parental leave six weeks prior to the birth of their child. This allows pregnant staff flexibility to park closer to their work location where available. Please refer to **Property and Facilities** for more information.

Carers of breastfeeding babies

At St Lucia and Herston there are special parking permits available for women who have returned to work or study while breastfeeding. This permit enables carers to bring the infant to campus and to park within reasonable proximity of the mother's place of work or study, so that she is able to breastfeed the child. Please refer to **Property and Facilities** for more information.

Carers with young children

St Lucia also provides specific bays in the Psychology car park and Multi-Level car parks for people with young children with prams.

Please refer to **Property and Facilities** for more information.





Childcare facilities on campus

There are five associated childcare facilities operating on the St Lucia and Gatton campuses. Subject to the Australian Government *Priority of Access Guidelines*, UQ staff and students are given preference on wait lists and openings at these childcare centres.

All associated childcare facilities are independent organisations to UQ and operate individually. When considering your return to work you should contact the childcare centre/s that you are interested in directly, to discuss their services and application process as early as possible. If you are interested in more than one childcare centre on campus, you should speak to, and apply to, each centre directly because they all operate independently. More information about childcare facilities available on campus can be found on the **Childcare Facilities website**.

As it may be difficult to secure a place which matches your intended return to work arrangements, you could also explore commercial childcare options in the vicinity of your workplace, home or other convenient location. More information about other childcare centres can be found on the government **MyChild website here**.

Parenting rooms on campus

The University is a breastfeeding friendly organisation and will make all reasonable accommodations for a staff member who is breastfeeding or expressing at work. There are a number of parenting rooms available to UQ staff, students and visitors across most UQ locations. The rooms are designed to be of a high standard in line with the guidelines set with the Australian Breastfeeding Association. **A full list of the facilities available can be found here.** You can also find the location of parenting rooms by using the **UQ Nav mobile phone application**, which is available for **download here**.

Breastfeeding Network

The purpose of the UQ Breastfeeding Network is to provide a support network for parents on campus who are breastfeeding, and is open to UQ staff and students. The UQ Breastfeeding Network aims to provide an opportunity for women who are breastfeeding or expressing, who have breastfed or have an interest in breastfeeding, to meet other women in the same position. The program aims to provide a network that will support each other, provide advice and information about breastfeeding and provide feedback to the Workplace Diversity and Inclusion team. To join the Breastfeeding Network, please contact **Workplace Diversity and Inclusion**.

Positive Parenting Program

The Positive Parenting Program (Triple P) is a parenting and family support system designed to prevent – as well as treat – behavioural and emotional problems in children and teenagers. It aims to prevent problems in the

family, school and community before they arise and to create family environments that encourage children to realise their potential. It aims to equip parents with the skills and confidence they need to be self-sufficient and to be able to manage family issues.

More information can be found on the **Triple P website here**.

More information

For more information please see:

- **Your local HR Team**
- **Workplace Diversity and Inclusion**
- **Employee Assist Program**
- **UQ Policies and Procedures**
- **UQ Resources for Work and Family**
- **Fair Work Ombudsman**
- **Australian Government Supporting Working Parents Guide**
- **Australian Breastfeeding Association**



Checklist

ACTION	CHECKED
Prior to going on leave organise a meeting with your supervisor to discuss: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• duration of your parental or adoption leave;• other leave entitlements you may wish to take;• interim arrangements for your position (e.g. handing over work to others or recruitment of a replacement staff member for the period of the leave);• commencing discussions about a return to work plan;• whether you wish to keep in touch while on leave, how you would like this to happen and your preferred contact details while you are on leave; and• any other questions, concerns or information that you would like to discuss.	
At the end of your last day at work, drop your parking permit (if you have one) off to P&F and provide them with a copy of your letter from HR to inform them that you are going on parental leave so that you will be able to have your parking permit available without having to go on a waiting list on your return to work. To avoid receiving a parking ticket during this time, it is suggested that you contact P&F Assist to organise this.	
Keep in touch with your supervisor as you determined in your discussion prior to going on leave.	
While on parental or adoption leave, if you change your mind about the length of your parental and adoption leave, in accordance with UQ Policy , or your return to work plan, contact your supervisor to discuss.	
Around 4-6 weeks prior to returning to work, if not before, schedule some time with your supervisor to discuss your return to work plan.	
Around 2-3 weeks prior to returning to work contact P&F to renew your parking permit (if you had one prior to going on parental or adoption leave).	
In the week or so prior to returning to work, familiarise yourself with the facilities and support available, such as the UQ Breastfeeding Network or Parenting Room if needed.	



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