



UPPSALA
UNIVERSITET

Parental Policy

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Uppsala University's Parental Policy

It is important that people are given an opportunity for lifelong development. It must be possible to combine **parenthood, working life** and **studies** to provide opportunities for good development.

Within Uppsala University the conditions for work and study should be such that parents, regardless of gender, can assume full responsibility for home and children without this being an impediment to a professional career or studies. According to the Equal Opportunities Act, Section 5, employers shall make it easier for employees, regardless of gender to combine gainful employment and parenthood.¹

It is important to create favourable preconditions at the University so that students and post-graduate students can combine studies and parenthood.

The conditions for parents who study and parents who have government employment differ greatly. For government employees the parental leave benefits are better than in many other jobs. However, students with children have a financial situation that is normally worse than other students. The picture of students as young and childless does not correspond to reality. In Sweden today, there are some 50,000 parents who are higher education students, which means that approximately every fifth student is a parent.

The objective with the Parental Policy is to support the positive attitude towards parenthood which must prevail at Uppsala University. It shall provide guidelines and support for students, post-graduate students and employees who are to become or are parents. This Policy shall also provide teachers and directors with guidance for how they should relate to students and employees with children.

As every work/study and family situation is unique and requires its own special solution, all guidelines of this Policy obviously cannot apply in each individual case. Regard must always be taken to the actual circumstances in the individual situation.

Special objectives for employees and post-graduate students

Directors should always view positively that parents, regardless of gender, make use of opportunities for parental leave and leave for care of children. By directors acting as good examples and personally taking parental leave they show employees that there is a positive attitude towards parenthood at the workplace.

In order for children to learn about their parent's/parents' work or study environment, they should be afforded an opportunity to accompany their parent(s) to the University at least once a year. The parent should consult with the head of the department/other officer formally responsible at the workplace, who must before such a visit make an assessment so that the child is not exposed to any risks (for example, in a laboratory environment).

It is stated in *Uppsala universitets anställningsordning. Föreskrifter för anställning av lärare*² that: "Personal circumstances such as work at home and family should be

¹ There are further Acts and documents, scheduled in Appendix 5, besides the Equal Opportunities Act, that govern issues concerning parenthood and work/studies.

² UFV 2002/1963

considered when making an overall assessment of the merits of the applicant. The family situation must not have any negative impact and regard should be taken to part-time employment, leave and the late conclusion of education owing to care of children or closely related persons in need of care.” This should also apply when assessing merits for other posts at the University.

One particular reason for employing research assistants who have been awarded a doctor’s degree more than five years ago is among other things parental leave. .³

Working conditions, pay development and development opportunities should not be less favourable for employees with children than for other employees. As the Social Insurance Agency (*Försäkringskassan*) does not increase parental allowance retroactively during ongoing leave, regard can be taken to this in during local pay negotiations. There should also be an opportunity for pay negotiations in conjunction with the return to service.

Conferences, meetings and seminars should normally not take place at times other than between 08.00 and 16.30 on weekdays, and for personnel with flexitime within the applicable flexitime framework.

All directors should take the initiative for implementing and offering prospective parents planning discussions prior to and after parental leave. Anyone who is on parental leave should be entitled to plan the parental leave with their manager responsible for personnel matters. Post-graduate students should similarly be afforded an additional tutor discussion/planning discussion⁴ in order to plan the research break considering the leave.

Unless otherwise determined in conjunction with the above-mentioned planning discussion, the head of the department is responsible for contact being maintained with individuals on parental leave. Invitations to joint social activities should also be sent to the individual on leave.

The individual who starts parental leave will obtain from the Human Resources Department a letter indicating how he/she will get the benefits of the parental allowance supplement paid by the employer.⁵

The rules are not entirely clear for post-graduate students. At Uppsala University, this issue is dealt with in accordance with Appendix 3, *Parental leave for post-graduate students*.

The Faculty Board⁶ may extend the course period owing to parental leave. Besides the extension of the post-graduate studies period that should be effected in this way and which directly corresponds to the time of the parental leave, respective Faculty Board can extend the period for a post-graduate student up to 3 months if the leave has created particular difficulties in resumption of collection of material, experiments or the like. One precondition is that the post-graduate student has been on leave for a long period (at least 4 months). The extension shall not relate to a period after the completion of the post-graduate studies and dissertation.

³ The Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 4, Section 10

⁴ See Appendix 1, Planning discussion before and after parental leave

⁵ See Appendix 2, For persons on parental leave

⁶ The Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 8, Section 8

Special objectives for students

In order to help students who have children to plan their studies, it is fundamental that the departments have good routines for timetable scheduling, so that students can in good time plan the form and time for child care.

Guidelines have been adopted concerning the student working conditions.⁷

These require among other things that preliminary timetables should be made available no later than one month before the course start and the final timetable at least one week before the course start.

Students with children can, among other things depending upon cultural and social background, study form and dependence upon how child care has been arranged, find themselves in rather different situations and have rather different problems combining parenthood with studies. In addition to certain general adaptations, it is therefore important that both administrators and instructing teachers and examiners demonstrate their understanding for the problems that may arise, and that they demonstrate their amenability, flexibility and willingness to find individual solutions to problems that arise, such as for example with the care of a sick child.

However, the following should apply with the aim of generally making it easier for students with children:

- that both obligatory instruction and examination, unless otherwise stipulated in the course catalogue, are scheduled for weekdays between 08.00 and 17.00. There may be special reasons for an examination at another time, for example in the case of re-examination
- that the course catalogue, as far as possible, provides information about the possible inclusion of field studies, practical experience and other study forms that may involve deviations from the above
- that timetable changes are avoided, and that changes in those cases where it is absolutely necessary, for example in the case of a teacher's sickness, are announced as far as possible in advance
- that, when necessary, an individual study rate for the courses is made available to the greatest extent possible
- that, when temporarily necessary, alternatives for obligatory components – including scheduled examinations – are offered
- that a contact person is appointed at the department (appropriately the Director of Studies or Study Counsellor) for students with children, with whom it is possible to discuss problems that arise and what possible individual adaptations may need to be made

⁷ See Appendix 5

Appendices

Appendix 1.

Planning discussion before and after parental leave

The aim of the discussion is to provide an opportunity to plan the work situation in conjunction with parental leave for everyone who is to be on leave for more than one month. The manager responsible for personnel matters should ensure that the discussion takes place. Notes of the main contents of the discussion should be kept.

The discussion

Before leave:

The following items should be discussed

- Planned scope (when, how long) of the parental leave
- Update of the job description
- Planning of any hand-over routines
- Discussion on how contacts with the workplace should be conducted during the parental leave

During the leave:

It is important that colleagues are aware what is happening at the workplace during the parental leave and a contact person must therefore be appointed.

In good time before the return to work it is also important that the manager responsible for personnel matters has contact with the individual on leave to discuss the scope of the service and to be able to plan future work tasks.

After the leave:

A review should be conducted in the follow-up discussion regarding what has previously been agreed, in order to then focus on the future.

- Discuss the scope of the work after the parental leave, for example full-time or part-time
- Prepare a job description
- Discuss developments in the work situation in the future
- Schedule further opportunities to review that everything is functioning as it should

Appendix 2. For persons on parental leave

Information is provided below relating to leave with parental allowance. Please contact your pay administrator in conjunction with extension of the leave.

Compensation from the Social Insurance Agency

In order to be entitled to allowance it is important that you have notified your correct income to the Social Insurance Agency.

Supplement from the University

The University supplements this allowance in accordance with the sickness benefit level from the Social Insurance Agency, a so-called 'parental allowance supplement'. This corresponds to 10% of the daily pay. If a half, fourth or eighth parental allowance is taken out, the supplement is paid to the same extent. A precondition for this supplement is that you were employed and served for at least 90 days prior to the start of the parental leave and that you obtained compensation above the lowest level from the Social Insurance Agency. However, certain service leave carries a right to a supplement. For example, when the leave results from a public assignment.

Statement from the Social Insurance Agency

In order to obtain the parental allowance supplement, you should submit a statement from the Social Insurance Agency, where the **number of parental days paid** is shown. The payment of the supplement will be included with the pay disbursed in the month after that in which the Personnel Administration Office has received the said payment statement. Those who for some reason refrain from the parental supplement should, nevertheless, submit a statement in order to get the correct number of vacation days. Give notice on the statement that compensation for parental allowance supplement should **not** be paid.

Substitution

Parental leave cannot be changed or substituted for another kind of leave, except for sickness if one owing to one's sickness is actually prevented from caring for the child.

Scheduling the periods

You may break up your parental leave into at most three periods per calendar year. A new period also means a change to the scope of the leave. A request for new leave should be made at least two months before the leave starts.

Vacation

You should normally schedule your vacation before the start of parental leave. Vacation is earned during the ongoing calendar year and shall, according to the existing agreement, be taken out before the end of the year. If you have taken out 20 vacation days the rest can be saved. It is possible to have at the most 40 saved vacation days. Periods of vacation cannot be 'slotted in' into parental leave. **Only days when you obtain allowance from the Social Insurance Agency qualify for vacation.** If you chose not to take out parental leave on, for example, a Saturday-Sunday, your vacation will be reduced accordingly.

The vacation will be reduced by 50%, 75% and 87.5%, respectively, if you take half, one-fourth, or one-eighth parental allowance and at the same time are on leave for the remaining part, provided the leave started at the same time as the parental leave. As the number of vacation days to which you are entitled depends upon how you take out the parental allowance, it is important that you at an early stage plan the taking of vacation together with your personnel administrator at the department/corresponding. Decisions regarding vacation granted should be sent to me at the Personnel Administration Office. In order for us to calculate your vacation, the statements from the Social Insurance Agency must be sent to the Human Resources Department. This also applies for days when you do not take out allowance at the minimum level (previously known as 'guarantee days'). If too many vacation days have been taken you will be liable to repay pay and vacation supplement for these, which correspond to 4.6% and 0.44%, respectively, of your fixed pay.

Tax deduction

During the time that you are on full leave a tax deduction of 30% will be made on the parental allowance supplement that you receive, unless you submit a tax adjustment decision or request a higher rate of tax.

You can obtain further information about this from me by telephone

Uppsala,

Yours sincerely,

Updated 3 June 2004

Appendix 3. Parental leave for post-graduate students

Förordningen om utbildningsbidrag (SFS 1995:938) provides that special education assistance may be granted for a period longer than the stipulated maximum of 2 years and 5 months if there are special reasons such as, for example, parental leave. It is also provided that the grant should be reduced with sickness or parental allowance paid if this is not related to an income that runs in parallel with the grant (SFS 1995:938 and 2004:963). Post-graduate students are thus entitled to retain the grant, but with a certain reduction.

Also, as regards employment as a post-graduate student (Higher Education Ordinance, Chapter 5, Section 7), it is provided that employment may be extended in the case of, for example, sickness or parental leave.

With the aim of the extension being granted on the same grounds for the entire University, the following recommendations are made:

- Any decision on extension should be taken in conjunction with a special education assistance or an assistant/post-graduate post being extended or ceasing.
- An extension should be allowed only if the leave has during one calendar year amounted to an aggregate of 14 days. In addition to parental leave, leave may be counted for e.g. union assignments or sickness in this period.
- The extension shall be allowed in the same form – special education assistance or post-graduate post – as the post-graduate student had when the leave was taken out. If it is the special education assistance which is to be extended, this shall be done before the post-graduate post has been taken up.
- The extension should only be granted for such a period of parental leave for which the post-graduate student takes out parental allowance benefits from the Social Insurance Agency. (For example, if one is on full leave for one calendar year, but only takes out parental leave for three days per week, then an extension for 3/7 years, i.e. 156 days is granted. This corresponds to the time that qualifies for vacation entitlement for those who are employed).
- Decisions on parental leave for those who receive special education assistance in combination with an assistant post should be taken in consultation with the Personnel Administration Office. This is necessary because the reduction of the special education assistance, vacation entitlement and the right to parental allowance supplement are affected by how one chooses to take out one's leave.
- The parental leave for post-graduate students, who only receive special education assistance, must be notified to the Personnel Administration Office as the grant will be reduced by the outgoing parental allowance supplement that is paid.

Appendix 4. Guidelines for Student Working Conditions

The guidelines have been approved by Uppsala University Board on 10 November 2004.

Physical and psychosocial work environment:

1. Relations among students, teachers, and other staff shall be characterized by mutual respect. No one should be exposed to discrimination on the basis of, for example, gender, ethnic background, age, social background, sexual orientation, disability, religious or political views.
2. Students, teachers and other employees are entitled to a good physical and psychosocial working environment. The heads of departments are primarily responsible for the working environment, but all students and employees are also personally responsible for contributing to a good working environment.
3. Every department shall be prepared to satisfy the special needs of students by the department providing individualised solutions. Students with disabilities are entitled to special support.

Quality development and student influence:

4. In order that courses and programmes shall be of good quality and keep pace with current research and the assessed future labour market, teaching and forms of examination shall be continuously followed-up and evaluated. Students shall be afforded an opportunity to participate in the work of the departments and the faculty boards with evaluation and development. The relevant faculty board shall, for each education programme, ensure that good coordination of the courses included in the programme is established. Course evaluations, which should be anonymous unless there are special reasons, shall be conducted, compiled and used for development work. A summary of the results should be made available for students. Information about the results and any decisions concerning action shall be provided.

Curricula and timetables:

5. Study programme syllabuses for programmes and overall curricula for courses shall be available in good time before the last date of application regarding the respective programme or course. An overall detail of the timetable of the mandatory teaching, examinations and re-examinations with a schedule of the main literature shall be made available no later than five weeks before the course starts.

Teaching and course material:

6. The course shall, in accordance with the Higher Education Ordinance, be free of charge. The University contributes, in accordance with the Vice-Chancellor's special decisions on grants to students for additional costs in the case of mandatory study travel and mandatory unpaid practical experience – to the students' additional costs in conjunction with travel, practical experience and field courses. The release from charges does not cover copying or course literature (corresponding). However, students may not be required to buy course literature, compendiums or other study material from the department or any other party.

7. The University shall endeavour to provide students with necessary access to electronic information resources, course literature as reference copies and other reference literature, qualified computer capacity and other equipment such as reading places, group study rooms and such other work places that are necessary for the course. These resources shall also, as far as possible, be at the disposal of students outside ordinary working hours.

8. Students who are writing large essays (10 points) or degree papers shall, as far as it is practical and financially possible, be entitled to choose freely among established scientific theories, methods and research perspectives. If there are special reasons, students should be given an opportunity, upon request, to change tutor.

Examination:

9. The same criteria for grade levels should apply in connection with both ordinary examinations and re-examinations. The criteria should be objective and shall be possible to make known to the students. If it is decisive for the setting of grades that the time limit set for the performance of a particular matter is observed, the consequences of a delay shall be made known in advance. Special requirements for delay shall then always be taken into account.

10. A student is entitled, unless there are special reasons, to have an examination corrected and graded within at most 25 calendar days, though at least 10 calendar days prior to re-examination. The examination result shall, following conclusion of the correction and setting of grades, be documented as soon as possible in UPPDOK. A special certificate of results shall, without delay, be possible to obtain for a student who verifies a need for a particular result.

11. Re-examination shall take place in close proximity to the result of the ordinary examination being announced and scheduled for between the middle of August and the middle of June, unless the Vice-Chancellor otherwise prescribes. Re-examination for various courses or sub-courses within a certain term should be on different days. A student whose examination has been lost, and similarly a student who has been given the wrong details for the date and time of the examination, shall without delay be afforded an opportunity to have a new examination, if it can be shown that the University bears the responsibility for what has occurred.

12. A student who without approved results has undergone two examinations for a course, or part of a course, which normally affords the right to have another examiner appointed but who, for special reasons, cannot obtain a new examiner is entitled to another form of examination. The right to a new examination or new practical experience to achieve an approved grade may only be limited when supported by decision of the Vice-Chancellor.

13. For courses that have ceased or undergone major changes, at least three examination occasions shall be provided during a time period that should comprise at least three terms.

Acceptance and selection:

14. Eligibility and selection rules for certain courses shall be formulated on the basis of objective requirements for the successful completion of the course in question. Changes to eligibility and selection rules for study programmes shall be effected as far in advance as possible. For courses, changes may not be made during the term covered by a particular course catalogue.

Collaboration group for student affairs:

15. A collaboration group for student affairs should be established at Uppsala University. Representatives of the student unions and nations, jointly with the University management, can discuss issues of a common nature in this group, among other things matters associated with these guidelines.

Appendix 5. Acts and ordinances

- *Parental Leave Act* (1995:584)
- *Lag om allmän försäkring* (1962:381)
- *Work Environment Act* (1977:1160)
- *Equal Opportunities Act* (1991:433)
- *Working Hours Act* (1982:673)
- *Employment Protection Act* (1982:80)
- *Förordning om tillgodoräknande av tid för föräldraledighet vid tillsättning av statligt reglerade tjänster F* (1985:335)
- *Tjänstledighetsförordningen* (1984:111)
- *Higher Education Ordinance* (1993:100)
- *Förordningen om utbildningsbidrag för doktorander* (1995:938)

Appendix 6. Guidelines and policy documents issued by Uppsala University

- *Uppsala universitets anställningsordning för lärare (2002)*
- *Riktlinjer till anställningsordningen (2003)*
- *Personalpolitiskt program för Uppsala universitet (1993)*
- *Gender Equality Plan 2004-2006 with the Action plan for 2006*
- *Guidelines for Student Working Conditions at Uppsala University, with Commentary (revised November 2004)*