



Maternity, paternity and parental review, University of Bradford

Karina Croucher, Nazira Karodia and Uduak Archibong

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Summary

The challenges of combining research and career progression with a new family are familiar ones to many academics, and there are various measures which Higher Education Institutions take to support their staff during this time of transition. This report investigates the University of Bradford's position in relation to competitor institutions, as well as staff experiences of maternity/paternity/parental leave, and recommends some key steps which would support staff and contribute to their research potential at the University. Recommendations include the training of line managers, revision of policy guidance documents, and steps towards a more family-friendly campus.

Background

Current UK legislation with regard to maternity leave/pay states the following:

- Employment rights are protected while on maternity leave, including pay raises, accrual of holiday, and the right to return to work.
- Statutory maternity leave is 52 weeks, comprising ordinary maternity leave for the first 26 weeks and additional maternity leave for the remaining 26 weeks.
- Statutory maternity pay (SMP) is for up to 39 weeks, and comprises 90% of average weekly earnings for the first six weeks, and £139.58 or 90% of average weekly wage (whichever is lowest) for the remaining 33 weeks.
- Paternity pay is one or two weeks' full pay.
- Employees can take up to ten keeping-in-touch days. These are optional and at the discretion of the employer.

In December 2014, UK legislation introduced shared parental leave (SPL), enabling the sharing of up to 52 weeks of leave for parents with a due date or adoption date of 5th April 2015 or later. However, in many instances, this remains at Statutory Pay level, without the further enhancements offered by employers for maternity leave.

Maternity, Paternity and Parental Leave at the University of Bradford

- University maternity pay is the equivalent of 16 weeks at full pay, comprising 6 weeks at full pay (including SMP), 20 weeks at half pay plus SMP, and 13 weeks at SMP.
- Paternity leave is up to two weeks on full pay (taken as a block). Additional paternity leave can be taken for up to 26 weeks within the first year of life/adoption, providing that the mother is still entitled to SMP and leave. This is paid at SMP. Staff also have the option to take unpaid paternity leave where they meet relevant criteria.
- Shared Parental Leave is four weeks at full pay, 20 weeks at half pay plus SMP, and 13 weeks at SMP.
- During maternity and additional paternity leave, the University of Bradford allows staff the option of taking up to ten paid keeping-in-touch days, use of which is to be discussed with line managers. An additional 20 'shared parental leave in touch' (SPLIT) days are available with shared parental leave.
- The University nursery is available to staff and students, with a discounted rate for employees of the University.
- A salary sacrifice scheme is offered for childcare vouchers.
- Pension contributions continue while in receipt of university maternity pay and statutory maternity pay; they discontinue after 9 months. Additionally, while in receipt of University pay or SMP, incremental progression is applicable.
- The University supports flexible working through the Flexitime scheme, which allows staff to work part time, take unpaid leave and re-arrange working patterns, where possible.
- The University will support staff requesting job sharing as long as it is reasonable and practicable to do so.
- Dependants leave is available for a maximum of two unpaid days to deal with unexpected emergencies.

Report

The project was conducted in two phases: data collection from other Higher Education Institutions; and focus group discussions on policy and experiences at the University of Bradford. The former sheds light on institutional policies, their accreditations and research profiles. The latter is aimed at providing recommendations for change at the University of Bradford.

Phase 1: The universities chosen for comparison had already been selected by the University HR Directorate following their review into pay and leave. Thirteen Universities were canvassed and ten responded, providing information on 11 Higher Education Institutions (including the University of Bradford). Three of these are Russell Group Universities, one of which is a Red Brick University, six are post-1992 Institutions (of which, two are Alliance Universities and two belong to the Cathedrals Group), Bradford is a 'Plate Glass' University, and two do not fall into the categorisations but remain public research institutions. The institutions represent the full scale of REF-rated institutions, including institutions performing in the top twenty, the bottom five (out of 128 institutions), and one un-submitted institution.

The phase 1 research was aimed at gaining a clearer picture of maternity, paternity and parental (MPP) benefits. The universities were asked about the benefits offered, such as keeping-in-touch days, reduced workload, and other initiatives. They were also asked about examples of good practice, and whether they had received any forms of recognition for gender equality, such as Athena SWAN and Juno awards (see Appendix 1 for the questions asked). The information received has been combined with the results from the University of Bradford's HR research to gain a full picture of MPP pay, leave and benefits.

Phase 2: Phase 2 research consisted of focus groups and interviews with staff from the University of Bradford. The responses from other HEIs were compiled into vignettes and used as a discussion tool within the focus groups/interviews, which were designed to investigate real-life experiences and expectations of MPP provision and support.

Outcomes

Phase 1: Data research into the HE sector

The below summarises the responses received from the surveyed universities.

Keeping-in-touch days

Governmental guidelines recommend up to ten keeping-in-touch days for those on maternity or parental leave. These are optional and should be agreed between the employee and employer (gov.uk <https://www.gov.uk/employee-rights-when-on-leave>).

From the 11 institutions, 10 offered keeping-in-touch days. However, use of these varied, with four HEIs explicitly stating that they could be used for conference attendance and research, with two institutions providing travel expenses in their policy to support conference and research activity, and one institution also supporting partner travel to conferences for childcare. At the University of Bradford, partners can travel for childcare as long as this is equivalent to or less than a single person travelling (i.e. by using a family railcard).

Working arrangements and pay

Nine of the 11 institutions, including the University of Bradford, offer flexible working (8) or part-time (3) working arrangements.

Two institutions offer some paid dependants leave, one of which (plus one other institution) also pays full National Insurance and Pension contributions for the whole of the leave period.

Responsibilities

Three institutions help with workload management, including one institution which offers research leave and two which offer reduced workloads, particularly reduced teaching and administration, on return to work after maternity leave.

Mentoring

Mentoring schemes are offered by two institutions, another has a research association for all staff, and another offers a parents' network and regular coffee meetings for existing parents and those considering a family. A further two institutions have schemes in place to examine gender equity in pay.

Nursery provision

It is a legal requirement to offer nursery vouchers as part of a salary sacrifice scheme, with three institutions, including the University of Bradford, hosting an on-site nursery. One institution additionally stated they offer some subsidised places (as does the University of Bradford).

Facilities

Two institutions have explicit breastfeeding/expressing rooms, and one institution explicitly stated they have baby changing facilities. Employment law requires a private space for expressing, so it is likely that other institutions offer this too, even if not explicitly stated in their policies.

Additional benefits include one institution which offers car parking for parents arriving on campus after 9.30am.

Health and well being

One institution has a staff helpline to support parents, another has a health and wellbeing initiative, and a further institution offers holiday sport activities for employees' children.

Accreditation

Unsurprisingly, those institutions which offer the most beneficial packages have also received accreditation, with three achieving an Athena SWAN bronze award, one applying for a silver award, and three further institutions with departments holding Athena SWAN awards, including two gold awards. One institution had notably progressive benefits but without accreditation. During this report research, the University of Bradford has been awarded Athena SWAN Bronze status. Notably, however, those ranking above Bradford in the REF (and in the REF top 20) also have higher accreditation, with silver institutional awards or applications, and silver/gold departmental awards.

Pay

In addition, research by the University of Bradford's HR team into maternity pay confirm that those institutions ranked ahead of Bradford in the REF 2014, and in accreditation, also have a more generous pay scheme, with a minimum of 18 weeks' full pay and additional half pay up to 39 weeks, compared to 6 weeks of full pay and up to 26 weeks (20 weeks of half pay) at the University of Bradford.

Paternity and Shared Parental Leave

Other than the University of Bradford, only one institution surveyed offered more than two weeks' full pay for paternity leave (with some offering one week of full pay and one week of statutory pay); the exception was one institution which offered up to 19 weeks enhanced paternity pay. Notably, the University of Bradford is ahead of many competitors, offering 4 weeks at full pay, 20 weeks at half pay plus SMP, and 13 weeks at SMP. Bradford also offers up to 20 keeping-in-touch days for shared leave. While this is excellent, it could be argued that this puts those taking Shared Parental Leave ahead of their equivalents taking maternity leave in terms of time spent researching during this period.

While UK employment law has changed to enable a more balanced approach to parental leave, until employers offer comparable pay benefits, it is clear that take up will remain low, and this in turn will lead to slow progress in addressing inequality in this area.

While not conclusive, it is unsurprising that there appears to be a link between progressive parental support, pay and benefits, and research outputs, since this creates a more supported and fruitful research environment. The following section examines the above initiatives and considers recommendations based on focus group feedback.

Phase 2: Focus Group observations

The results of Phase 1 were examined in focus groups for University of Bradford staff. Focus groups were conducted on two participant types, those with experience of MPP leave and those without experience. The focus groups included active researchers as well as support staff; notably, some of the support staff were able to reflect on their experiences of supporting researchers through MPP and were able to provide insights into differences in practice across the University.

Twelve members of staff took part in the phase 2 study, which consisted of one focus group of 8 participants and a further 4 focused interviews, providing over 9 hours of research data (see Appendix 2). While this constitutes a relatively small study, the results present insights into the experiences and expectations of staff, which, combined with the data from phase 1, have been used to draw up recommendations for HEIs in their consideration of equity for parents and researchers.

Seven participants had experience of MPP leave, the earliest in 1987, followed by parental leave in 2004, 2005, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2012 and 2015; four participants had had more than one experience of MPP leave. Although at least four of the participants were research-active, only one had been submitted in either the Research Assessment Exercise in 2008 or the Research Excellence Framework in 2014, and three explicitly stated that research had been influenced by MPP leave; this included omission from grants relating to their research which had been submitted while they were on leave, and the timing of maternity leave over the summer period, which impacted on research time. In one additional case, the absence of a 'return to work' meeting to set out targets and workload has also impacted on research potential.

Six of the seven participants had been aware of the MPP leave policies before taking leave, and had heard about the policies through one of the following: University staff briefings (1), Government website (1); University website (2); and Human resources (1).

Participants were given four vignettes of policies, based on phase 1 research (see Appendix 3). They were asked to provide their thoughts on the policies and benefits, and what could be done to strengthen them. They were also asked to reflect on their own experiences in light of the policies.

Strengths of University of Bradford policy

Childcare

The University nursery is regarded as a real strength: it provides safe and stable childcare, and other benefits include the network provided through meeting other parents via the nursery. The service could be improved further if it was situated on the main university campus. This also feeds into later recommendations for a more family-focused campus.

Flexible working

The University of Bradford states that flexible working is available and that 'every effort will be made to agree to such requests where it is possible to make satisfactory alternative arrangements' (University of Bradford Maternity Policy, p.8). While this is welcome, our focus groups revealed real discrepancies between its implementation across the University. Notably, while not named in order to preserve anonymity, one area of the University is regarded as a particular 'black spot' with flexible leave repeatedly denied for caring duties, seriously impacting on stress and welfare of employees. Some participants noted that the flexible working policy could be taken further through job sharing, something seen as valuable in their previous employment (the employer sees increased productivity with commitment forged between job-sharers and the sense of community which job sharing encourages). Significantly, these benefits would serve all carers, not simply parents, as well as staff with other commitments.

Where flexible and part time working was successful, employees were complimentary of the system and felt productive at work, while still able to accommodate their other commitments.

Potential areas of improvement

Culture change, part-time working and phased return:

The culture of the University was criticised, with some employees feeling uncomfortable about speaking out about meetings outside of core hours, or having to leave on time for school pick-ups; it seemed more socially acceptable to leave for sports or social activities.

Furthermore, there is a general stigmatisation of part-time workers, perceived as being not as committed as full time staff. This is a cause of frustration with many part-time workers, who are equally committed and often more productive due to the time constraints on their working life. Notably, this had not been the case at other HEIs of employment for focus group participants. One potential route to addressing this issue is through the training of line managers, and in turn encouraging and dissemination a change of attitude. This would also support communication of policy and procedure, and go towards ensuring equity in policy implementation across the University. One of the focus group participants also suggested that training could be expanded to include cultural interpretations of

the family, addressing differences in caring responsibilities, and benefitting not only parents but also other types of carers.

For research staff, there was a call that, if working part time, research was still considered within contract time; there is the cultural assumption that research will get done in the researchers' own time, and when reducing hours from full to part time, it is often at the expense of research. Clearly this is a hindrance for a university aiming for excellent REF results.

A suggestion was made for phased return, building hours back up to full time following leave.

Paternity leave:

Clearer ring-fencing of paternity leave is needed - one participant noted that they were required to mark exams during their two-week paternity leave. They were an early career employee and felt unable to raise this issue with their line manager. Clearly, if policies were implemented correctly, this situation could have been avoided or a more satisfactory outcome reached.

Keeping in touch days:

While keeping-in-touch days are regarded as an asset, it was commented that without childcare support for these ten days, it was difficult to make them as effective as possible. Again, there were differences throughout the University, with some employees feeling able to bring children onto campus, while others struggled to find childcare or simply felt unable to make the most of the days available. Another noted that for research-active staff, ten days could be quickly filled and that the availability of additional days would be preferable (as is reflected in the shared parental leave policy). Other institutions actively promoted KIT days for conferences, including providing travel support or the use of travel funds to support partners accompanying academics to conferences; currently this is only supported at the University of Bradford if the total family travel comes to less than individual travel (e.g. with a family rail card), where funding is available for research at School level.

Line management:

Effective line management throughout the MPP period is crucial. There are significant differences across the University regarding this. For instance, some members of staff receive back to work interviews and appraisals of their workloads, whilst others do not, or find that their workloads have been increased (this is contrary to other institutions where workloads are reduced when returning to work). There is concern, however, that reduced workloads might put undue pressure on colleagues, and so this would need to be handled fairly in order to avoid resentment of staff with caring duties.

Further changes can be line-manager driven, such as respecting work/life balance; a simple step which could have significant impact is encouraging a culture which does not routinely send emails out of hours. This would encourage all employees, regardless of caring responsibilities, to have greater acknowledgement of work/life balance.

Support from line managers is key, including in the promotion and the communication of opportunities while on leave, for instance, internal positions which may be missed. In addition, advice on CVs and promotion would make taking these opportunities easier. Notably, this would be of value to all staff.

Support networks:

Competitor universities have a range of support mechanisms in place, including two universities with a parent's network, one of which also holds monthly coffee mornings which provide support for existing parents and those thinking of starting a family. Such networks would be a low cost support mechanism, providing peer support for parents. Likewise, a dedicated research support network would support researchers in their transition back to work.

Also offered at one other institution is a staff helpline, available to all staff. While this may be costly to implement, there is scope at Bradford to utilise and promote existing support mechanisms, such as the University's counselling service. Including such services in the MPP documents would make these avenues of support clearer.

Mentoring:

Mentoring is also offered at two other institutions; this would be another low cost strategy for supporting returners to work.

Family-friendly universities:

Other institutions are actively family-friendly, with a number of provisions, including breastfeeding spaces, changing facilities, children's activities and summer clubs, and welcoming children on to campus. Simple steps can be taken to make the University of Bradford campus more appealing, including 'breastfeeding welcome' signs, or dedicated space for feeding; and making the baby changing facility more accessible – currently a key is needed from reception on the other side of the Richmond Building, which, when needed urgently, is a barrier to its use, with no real reason communicated for keeping the facilities locked.

Activities at the sports centre during the summer could potentially be beneficial, even if there are cost implications, and having child-friendly spaces would be helpful, including an indoor and outdoor play area. Welcoming families at university events, such as the end of year celebration events, would be a positive step. While some parents are happy to bring their children along, others noted that they were unsure whether children would be welcome, and one focus group participant who had asked permission had been advised not to bring children, as the University does not hold adequate insurance. Clearly this presents an immediate barrier to the inclusion of families. Enabling families to attend such events, and communicating this, would go a long way to reassuring parents that they can include their families in work social events.

Likewise, when attending meetings and other events, particularly during maternity leave, there is a real discrepancy between whether members of staff feel able to do this, with one feeling that bringing children in to the workplace was

stigmatised. While some members of staff feel able to bring their children to work when necessary, others do not, and this again appears to be dependent on the attitudes of individual line managers.

Parking:

One institution recognised that parking can be an issue for those dropping off children at school before work, and so has dedicated parking spaces.

Accommodation:

While not noted in the policies at other institutions, family-friendly accommodation would be a real strength at the University, particularly for new members of staff and for research students who might need to move their families to Bradford. Such provision, even if temporary, would welcome new starters, particularly those from overseas.

Policy:

The University's policy documents could have a more enabling tone. Other institutions' policies sounded much more supportive of individuals and their needs.

Many of the recommendations would benefit all members of staff, regardless of parental status. However, it was noted that the policy should actively include same-sex parents, as well as other types of carers.

Participants were asked what they considered to be the most important/necessary change. Answers included:

- A culture which offers fair, flexible working policy implemented across the whole university and challenges assumptions about the roles suitable for job share
- Return to work interview and communication of this policy
- Expanding KIT days with more explicit policy to support research
- Returners mentoring programme (for all returners)
- Making the maternity policy more people-focused
- Providing a play area on campus

Recommendations

The following recommendations arise from the report. Though there are varying cost implications to the recommendations, many would be achievable with minimal investment.

- Training line managers. This would contribute towards ensuring equitable opportunities, whether in relation to flexible working, use of KIT days, and returning to work provision and support. Training for line managers would go a long way to ensuring all are cohesive with policy. This should include training on paternity leave, what is reasonable to ask, and consideration of the impact on early career researchers and those with fixed-term contracts. Training could also include cultural interpretations of the family and caring responsibilities, as well as consideration of non-traditional families, such as same-sex parents. Enforcement of return to work interviews would focus both line-managers and returners on the duties once back at work and highlight any additional support required.
- It can be argued that a culture shift is needed to re-value part time and flexible workers, including the role of research within part time contracts, job sharing, and to provide a more family-friendly university. A starting point could include highlighting the value of part time workers in line manager training.
- A further step would be to encourage a working culture that does not routinely expect out of hours working, including the sending of emails outside of core work hours. This could be line-manager-driven, with an impact of instilling a culture which recognises the importance of work/life balance.
- For encouraging research, mentoring programmes, reduced workloads and research leave are all initiatives used by our competitors ranking higher than us in both accreditation and REF tables. The number of keeping-in-touch days could be expanded to match those offered to parents taking shared parental leave. In addition, more explicit advice on keeping-in-touch days, including use for conferences, with travel support and support for child care during these days, would ensure researchers can use them to the greatest effect (benefiting both employee and employer).
- Including existing benefits in MPP documents would produce a more welcoming policy, such as advertising the counselling service, the university's well-being initiative and sports centre. A revision of the MPP policy documents, to make them more 'people focused', would be a cost-effective way of changing the reception of policies, and making them more tailored to individual groups; for instance, separate guidance documents could be created for adoption by same-sex couples, and could include other resources for support.

- The establishment of a parent/carers network would be a low-cost way of providing a forum for peer-support, and could include a monthly coffee meeting, and/or email forum. Likewise, a researchers' forum could also provide support through monthly meetings, using the existing UoB researchers' mailing list as a starting point.
- Further support could be provided through CV and career support, drawing on existing resources, such as the Careers Service and Library. Feeding in to this, more use could be made of mentors within the University. Currently, many new starters have mentors; this could be expanded to provide mentoring support for new parents. This may require cross-faculty consideration for use of mentors (for instance, there may not be enough senior female academics in some areas, or same-sex parents may find it valuable to have a mentor with comparable experience, or have the opportunity to become a mentor for others). Notably, such steps should be available to all parents/carers, and not just female employees.
- Some simple steps could be taken to ensure a more welcoming environment, including 'breastfeeding welcome' signs, opening of baby changing facilities, explicit invitation of families to university social events and a network for parents/potential parents. Other steps would require greater investment, such as play areas (indoor and/or outdoor), holiday activities, siting of the nursery closer to campus, and family-friendly accommodation. Notably, these steps would help all parents, regardless of research status.

It is evident that some simple and cost-effective steps can be taken to deliver a better experience for those taking maternity, paternity and parental leave, while others would require longer-term investment. Not least, the pay differentials highlighted by Human Resources research highlights that the University of Bradford is behind its REF competitors in terms of pay and duration of maternity leave; this results in parents returning to work sooner, but with the additional pressures and stresses that may ultimately be detrimental to progress; in other universities, there is a correlation between pay and duration of leave, REF ranking and gender accreditation awards. Of note, however, is the University of Bradford's Shared Parental Leave Policy, which includes additional keeping-in-touch days, and a more generous pay scheme than the other universities surveyed for Shared Parental Leave.

It is clear that the University is dedicated to its staff development, and one of the focus group participants noted that its provision is not a great distance behind some of our competitors, and it would take relatively small steps to close the gap.

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Appendix 1: Questions asked of the HEIs surveyed

The questions asked of the HEIs were:

1. Do you offer any benefits, above pay and leave to those on maternity/paternity and parental leave and when they return to work? For instance, use of 'keeping in touch' days for research, support with child care or travel to conferences while on leave or after returning, post doc support, reduced workloads on return to work (whether teaching or admin), and nursery and childcare benefits?
2. Has your University earned any form of recognition such as Athena Swan or Juno?
3. Can you provide us with any examples of your university displaying good practice within institution?
4. In addition to details on maternity pay already provided to our HR team, what type of pay and duration does you university offer (if any) for paternity and parental leave that is beyond the legal requirement?

Appendix 2: Demographics of focus groups/interview participants

Question	Responses
Faculty	Not Answered: 5 Professional Services:3 Engineering and Informatics: 1 Life Sciences: 2 Management and Law: 1
Age	Under 28: 1 29-38: 6 39-48: 4 49-58: 1
Start date Before 1999: 2000-2005: 2006-2011: 2012-2016:	Not Answered: 2 1 3 3 3
Did you take maternity/paternity leave?	Yes: 7 No: 5
Maternity/paternity leave dates Before 1999: 2000-2009: 2010-2015:	1 4 5
Did you know about the parental leave policy before taking leave?	Yes: 6 No: 2 Not answered: 2
How do you hear about it?	Staff briefing: 1 Colleagues: 1 Government website: 1 University website: 2 HR: 1 Not answered: 3 Other: 1
Were you submitted for RAE 2008?	Yes: 1 No: 10 Not answered: 1
Were you submitted for RAE 2014?	Yes: 1 No: 9 Not answered: 2
Was your research influenced by leave?	Not answered: 4 Yes: 3

Appendix 3: Vignettes used in focus groups/interviews

University of Bradford

The University of Bradford allows staff the option of keeping in touch days (Maximum of 10 days) which are paid. Additionally, access to the University nursery is available to staff while enjoying a discount, and the option of childcare vouchers which can provide staff with savings from up to £1000. Furthermore, pension contributions continue while in receipt of pay/SMP.

The University supports flexible working through the Flexitime scheme, which allows staff to work part time, take unpaid leave and re-arrange working patterns. Additionally, the University will agree with staff requesting job sharing as long as it is reasonable and practicable to do so.

Additionally, while in receipt of University pay or SMP, incremental progression will be applicable.

Institution 2

This University allows its staff the option of KIT days (maximum of 10 days) which may be used to attend training courses, meetings and as part of the staff members' re-introduction to work. Additionally, childcare vouchers are offered in the form of salary extras to any staff members who are interested.

The University also implements The Women Academic Returners Programme which is designed to support Academics and Researchers on their return from maternity leave, and aims to enable women to concentrate on their research activities on return from maternity leave, thus facilitating career development/progression. The Faculty of Engineering 'Women in engineering' initiative aims to redress gender imbalance and raise the profile of talented female engineers.

Additionally, the Parents in Academia network aims to be a conduit for information, support all staff through career breaks and share best practice and "how to" tips. The network holds quarterly coffee mornings for men and women who have families, are about to start a family, or are thinking to have children in the future. There is also informal mentoring scheme Parent to Parent to help support parents going on, or returning from, parental leave.

The Staff Helpline- Balancing everyday life together with the requirements of work and home can create pressures for all. To assist staff in achieving this balance, Health Assured's qualified staff can help university staff find practical ways forward when they feel overwhelmed by problems. The advisors are highly trained to quickly find what staff need and help them get back in control of their life.

The Reward and Recognition strategy- Flexibility within the model will ensure that managers are able to tailor rewards to be attractive to potential and existing staff. Staff will be enabled to make individual choices in relation to their total reward package, to suit their diverse and changing needs.

A university health and wellbeing initiative for staff provides a wide range of enjoyable and energising activities, plus lots of resources and advice to help staff look after their health.

Institution 3

This university provides tax efficient childcare vouchers as part of its salary sacrifice scheme, a campus based nursery, facilities for staff or students wishing to breastfeed or express milk and baby changing facilities.

All Departments are encouraged to introduce support for staff returning from an extended period of leave (e.g. maternity) including a period of research leave for academic staff.

Extensive Flexitime Policy which is available to all staff, and departments are given mechanism for recording and monitoring requests for flexible working.

Staff research association allows research staff to share best practice, and concerns. Helps build a strong research community.

Dedicated budget to support research fellowship applications.

Structured training programmes for leadership, including a good range of award-winning programmes, and coaching available to support individual development.

The University also hosts multisport and activity camps for employees' children during school holidays.

Provides designated parking spaces for those who have to arrive at work after 9.30am.

Institution 4

Full National Insurance and pension contributions for women throughout maternity leave and shared parental leave, including the unpaid leave period.

The University encourages 'keep in touch days'. Managers are aware of 'keep in touch days' and encourage employees to use them to improve continuity of their career and research, including conference attendance. Any travel or subsistence costs incurred in the course of someone's work would be paid as a legitimate expense (irrespective of whether a KIT day)

On return to work, it is common practice for staff to have a relieved teaching and/or admin load to focus on their research. Additionally, part time work is rarely refused.

All employees are entitled to childcare vouchers via salary sacrifice, and there are some subsidised places at the on-site nursery.

Some faculties have implemented additional funding schemes which can be used flexibly by staff returning from maternity, paternity, or adoption leave. This includes funding for research assistants for cover, childcare, or partner travel for conferences.

Academic reward project: offers guidance on career progression on different pathways (research focused, education focused, enterprise focused and balanced); additional guidance on promotion aligned to these pathway; new online appraisal process (so completion can be tracked) and compulsory training on appraisal discussions, including online unconscious bias training.

Promotion support and guidance: new appraisal process requires managers to discuss promotion and put plans in place for development. Workshops arranged within each faculty to explain promotion process; CV workshops for honing applications; and shortlisted applicants get interview coaching from an external provider.

The University also runs several Springboard programmes throughout the year for various groups of women: ECRs, academics and professional services employees.