



UNIVERSITY OF PLYMOUTH

Compassionate Leave Policy
V4 02/11/2011

Compassionate leave

Introduction

The University's compassionate leave policy is intended to help staff to cope with such eventualities as serious/terminal illness or death of a family member. For less serious illness of a family member or dependant please refer to our Time off for Dependants Guidelines.

Entitlements

1. *In case of death of a family member* - up to five days' leave with pay. This leave does not necessarily have to be taken immediately after the death, e.g. if a parent living in another part of the country dies it might be more helpful to start the leave a few days after the death.
2. *In case of sickness of serious/terminal illness a family member* - up to five days' leave with pay, half of which should be counted against the staff member's annual leave entitlement. For example, if five days' leave had to be taken, 2.5 days would be given as compassionate leave and 2.5 days would be deducted on the leave card. Term-time staff with no leave entitlement will need to make up the time given to other staff as annual leave.

In (2) above, if the employee has no annual leave left to use, the annual leave element can be made up after return to work or can be given as unpaid leave.

Definition of a family member - "Family member" in this context means relatives who are one degree removed from the employee, i.e. partner, brother, sister, mother, father, son or daughter *of either the staff member or the staff member's partner*. Grandparents or grandchildren, for example, may therefore not be included in this context. Persons not related as described above but occupying a similar position in the family may be included, e.g. an Aunt who has taken the place of the mother.

Managers have the discretion to increase or vary the above entitlements taking account of the needs of the service. Staff should approach their own manager if they need a longer period of compassionate leave or if they wish to discuss varying their contract, e.g. to part-time on a temporary basis, to help them cope with domestic difficulties. Managers also have the discretion to authorise leave without pay in difficult circumstances. In all these exceptional circumstances, managers are advised to refer to their Human Resources Advisor for advice regarding decisions which may set precedents.