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Family Service

Advice | Support | Connection



Guide on family-conscious leadership

Recommended actions for supervisors



**Balancing
study, work
and family**



Zertifikat seit 2008
audit familiengerechte
hochschule

Dear Colleagues,

Ulm University has a great interest in promoting a healthy balance of study, work and family. This has also been underlined in the mission statement on gender equality.

This guide is all about creating family-friendly work conditions in order to increase employee satisfaction, motivation and performance. Another goal is to strengthen the position of women at work and especially in science, as they currently still carry a large part of the family responsibilities.

More and more families today want to share the professional and family responsibilities equally between the partners. Our offers for a better balance are thus generally attractive for men as well. We see ourselves as family-friendly University and want a family-friendly and appreciative culture in all areas and on all levels.

Please support your staff members in the balancing act of work requirements and family obligations. This 'Guide on family-conscious leadership' gives you hands-on recommendations. Please utilise them in your day-to-day management and consider the family responsibilities of your staff members, provided they don't conflict with professional matters. Your contact persons are happy to help you with assessing and deciding if a desired measure can be realised.

Prof. Dr.-Ing. Michael Weber
President

Dieter Kaufmann
Chief Financial Officer

Work hours

Part-time arrangements to balance family obligations

Ulm University offers numerous part-time, parental and caregiver leave models that can be tailored to individual family responsibilities. Please support your staff in making use of those models. Should the nature of the work not allow for part-time work, a written explanation needs to be provided to HR Services. The above-mentioned work arrangements are explicitly aimed at men and supervisors also. HR Services will review the feasibility of part-time requests from employees in a supervisor position in consultation with the President or the Chief Financial Officer and, if approved, develop an individual solution.

Considering family obligations when granting annual leave

School holidays are periods of high demand for annual leave and there are valid reasons to want time off during that time. Families are often unable to plan their holidays flexibly and depend on school holidays. To afford all staff sufficient opportunities for a holiday, please prioritise staff members with family obligations when it comes to granting leave during school holidays or at the same time as their partners. When planning your staff's annual leave, please also be considerate of those who need to organise care arrangements.

Please note that full-time academic staff with teaching obligations must take their annual leave during lecture-free periods. Please reconcile the interests of staff members with and those without family responsibilities in a fair manner and cultivate mutual understanding.

Time off in lieu with flexitime

According to our service agreement on work hours (*Dienstvereinbarung Arbeitszeit*), you can also grant time off in lieu for a few hours or days in addition to the regular annual leave. This is another way to help with the balancing act of work and family.



Work location

Temporary work from home

The option to temporarily work from home in times of particularly intense family burdens can reduce absenteeism as well as increase staff motivation. Therefore, please allow your staff members to work from home in times of family ‘emergencies’, if their tasks and home environment are suitable for that. Your contact persons in HR Services can help you with the details and draw up an individual agreement.

Expanding telework

Telework is another suitable instrument to help reconcile the demands of work and family. Please be supportive of requests for teleworking arrangements, insofar as the tasks are suitable for this purpose. For further details on these arrangements, please see the *Dienstvereinbarung Telearbeit* (workplace agreement on telework) or contact HR Services.



Work organisation

Induction training, substitute arrangements

Thorough induction training is an expression of appreciation, but also an economic necessity. Plan the induction carefully (induction training plans, mentorships). The purpose of substitute arrangements is to ensure that work can be continued both in foreseeable (holidays, business trips) and in unforeseeable cases of absence (e.g. illness). Please make arrangements for possible substitution scenarios.

Uni Special: substitute pool for secretariats

The University provides additional staffing resources to support initiatives where several institutions team up for mutual secretariat support in cases of family- or illness-related staff shortage (inter-institutional substitute pools).

Family-friendly meeting times

When scheduling meetings, please be considerate that part-time employees and those who are on flexitime are able to participate. If someone is nevertheless unable to attend a meeting, please clarify who will inform the absentee/s on the topics and outcomes discussed.

Leadership culture and competence

Family-conscious approach to fixed-term contracts

Ulm University has a particular duty of care towards staff with family obligations when it comes to fixed-term employment contracts and their extension. Please take this into consideration when making a decision on the terms of employment contracts. Please make yourself available when a staff member wants to talk about their professional future, the terms of their employment contract or any other topic.

Your contact persons in HR Services are happy to provide assistance and advice.

Training on topics of balancing work and family

Ulm University also offers internal events on topics of balancing work and family, such as those organised by the Gender Equality Officer or by Staff Development, Gender and Diversity.

We would like to encourage you to participate both in your own interest and in your role as a supervisor, and also enable your staff to participate as well.

Leading by example

As a supervisor, you have an exemplary role and are a key figure who can significantly contribute to making the University a place that practices and lives family-friendliness on a consistent basis. Please make use of our special training programme for supervisors. Further information can be obtained from Staff Development, Gender and Diversity.

Successfully shaping your leadership role

Herr Thomas Haimerl, Leiter der Abt. Personalentwicklung, Thomas Haimerl, Head of Staff Development, Gender and Diversity and psychologist with a focus on work and organisational psychology, provides assistance in various matters such as conflict resolution and team development, leadership and feedback conversations, or designing recruitment and selection procedures.

Staff development

Training and development

Lifelong learning is essential to keep up with professional developments. Should the participation of academic staff in staff development measures be contingent on professional care arrangements, e.g. a babysitter, it might be possible to cover the costs with gender equality funds of the German Research Foundation (*Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft; DFG*). Contact the Gender Equality Office for advice.

Maintaining contact during prolonged leave of absence

By keeping in touch during longer leave of absence and discussing what their return to work might look like, you signal staff members that you are interested in the person and their skills. This helps retain experienced staff and makes it easier for them to return to work after a family-related break. You can find a guideline (for contact maintenance) on the website:
<https://www.uni-ulm.de/einrichtungen/zuv/dezernat-3/pe/>

Additional offers to help you support junior scientists

Funding programmes for junior scientists

Inform junior researchers about existing funding opportunities and advisory institutions (e.g. Office for Gender Equality, the Graduate and Professional Training Centre ProTrainU) and encourage them to make use of these opportunities.

Lab assistance for female junior scientists

Lab assistance allows female scientists to continue their research during periods of pregnancy and breastfeeding, if they are unable to carry out the practical lab work themselves due to medical reasons.

If this support cannot be financed via an externally funded project at your institute, or through scholarships, or the gender equality funds of your faculty, you can contact the Family Service to help you apply for funding through central University funds.

Career planning and perspectives

In your role as a supervisor, you facilitate the technical and transferable skills development of junior scientists. It is your responsibility to support your doctoral candidates in completing their doctorates within a reasonable period of time. You also actively support postdoctoral researchers in their further professional development and give them your assessment of their career prospects.

Throughout and at the end of the doctoral phase, you advise your doctoral candidates on the scientific aspects of their career and possibly also on career options outside of science. The Graduate and Professional Training Centre ProTrainU can help with this and offers in particular transferable skills training and career counselling – also with regard to non-scientific career paths.

Conduct structured interviews with your postdocs after two years at the latest and discuss career prospects as well as any difficulties you may have identified.

Advice and further funding opportunities for junior scientists can be found on the ProTrainU website at www.uni-ulm.de/protrainu

