



# EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNALS

**Claimant:** Miss L Wood

**Respondent:** QIC Trims Ltd

**Heard at:** Reading

**On:** 16 October 2025

**Before:** Employment Judge Anstis

**Representation:**

Claimant: In person

Respondent: Ms N McLachlan

## REASONS

1. These written reasons are provided at the request of the respondent. The relevant judgment was sent to the parties on 31 October 2025 and these reasons were requested on 13 November 2025.
2. This hearing has been convened by order of EJ Michell to consider whether or not I should extend time for the claimant's claims of unfair dismissal and pregnancy and maternity discrimination, both of which relate to her dismissal, which took effect on 30 April 2024.
3. By the end of the hearing, Ms McLachlan agreed with me that the last date for the claimant to submit an in time claim was 9 September 2024. The claimant did not express a view on the end of the time limit, but 9 September 2024 was in any event the later of the two possible dates discussed at this hearing. Her claim was submitted on 21 February 2025, approximately 5½ months out of time. Her daughter was born on 21 November 2024.
4. For the avoidance of doubt, this is not a case in which the claimant says that she was unaware of any discrimination. On the contrary, she seems to have thought right from the start that this was a discriminatory dismissal. She also contacted ACAS for early conciliation well within time, so clearly was aware of the possibility of enforcing legal rights against the respondent. The difficulty is why she delayed in following up that early conciliation with a tribunal claim.
5. The claimant's position on the reason for her being late with the claim is summed up in her witness statement in the following way:

*“... the delay in bringing my claim and submitting the relevant evidence was due to personal circumstances surrounding my pregnancy ...*

*During this time, I was under close medical supervision and experiencing significant emotional, mental and physical strain. My primary focus was on safeguarding my health and that of my unborn child, and I was advised to avoid stress and unnecessary strain wherever possible.*

*These circumstances made it extremely difficult for me to engage in the process of preparing and filing a claim within the original timeframe.”*

6. The claimant backs this up with medical records covering the period of her pregnancy.
7. I note from that, but do not need to refer in any detail to, the claimant's difficult personal circumstances that had affected her mental health and may well have caused her to be more than usually nervous about the pregnancy. Without wishing to underestimate those concerns, the medical records would appear to show a pregnancy well within medical norms. I understand the claimant's daughter was in neo-natal intensive care for a week after birth, but mother and baby were then discharged from hospital.
8. The most significant piece of medical evidence is a letter from the specialist perinatal mental health service dated 12 August 2024. It appears that some time in July the claimant had been referred to them because of concerns about her mental health. An assessment carried out on 30 July 2024 recorded largely “normal” results. The claimant suggested that this was because she was at the time, “masking”.
9. The respondent points to the claimant having worked throughout this period, although the claimant says that her job was undemanding, and even then she needed time off for various medical appointments. The respondent also relies on material taken from the claimant's Facebook page. This largely post-dates the birth of her child. The claimant has objected to that material being used by the respondent. I can well understand that a person's Facebook page may not be an entirely accurate and candid account of matters, and I have not found those extracts to be of assistance in reaching my decision.
10. The first question is whether, in terms of the unfair dismissal time limit, it was reasonably practicable for the claimant to bring her claim within time.
11. I understand that this was a difficult time for the claimant and that she was nervous about her pregnancy. She says that medical advice was to avoid stress. When questioned on that she produced the letter that she relied on for that, but that does not mention avoiding stress.
12. The claimant was, in the period up to the birth of her daughter, able to hold down a job, which even if undemanding would have involved some stresses, strains and paperwork. She was also able to undertake early conciliation. If

there were, as there may well have been, difficult times, there was also periods that were not so difficult, as detailed in the mental health assessment. My finding is that she could have submitted her claim within the normal time limit, and accordingly she has not shown that it was not reasonably practicable for her to bring the claim within the time limit. Accordingly her claim of unfair dismissal must be struck out as the tribunal did not have jurisdiction to consider it.

13. A much more difficult question arises in relation to the discrimination claims, where I can extend time if it is "just and equitable" to do so. Saying that the claimant could have brought her claim within time does not rule out a just and equitable extension of time.
14. The law says that I have a broad discretion in considering whether or not to extend time. Relevant factors will include the reason for and length of the delay and the respective prejudice to the parties if time is or is not extended.
15. The delay is 5½ months, which I would consider to be a mid-length of delay. It is not so trivial that it can easily be disregarded nor so long as to obviously be of decisive significance. The reasons for it have been referred to earlier in this decision.
16. The respondent has not drawn any attention to any particular prejudice to which it would be subject if the claimant continued, such as witnesses or documents no longer being available. Of course, for the claimant if time was not to be extended she would lose the only claim available to her.
17. The balance here is difficult to strike, but I have decided to exercise my discretion in favour of an extension of time on the discrimination claim. While possible for the claimant to bring the claim I do accept that she was in difficulty in doing so. The delay is not excessive. The respondent has not suggested any particular prejudice to which it would be subject on an extension of time (by which I mean no prejudice beyond having to address the claim) and in those circumstances I will extend time.

Approved by Employment Judge Anstis  
18 November 2025

Reasons sent to the parties on:  
19 November 2025

For the Tribunal