RCUK Briefing on Maternity, Paternity and Adoption Leave and Pay

This comprehensive briefing provides information relating to Maternity, Paternity and Adoption Leave and Pay from the Terms and Conditions of Grants and Training Grants, the RCUK Training Grant Guide and Research Council Funding Guides.

It is intended primarily for Research Council funded students and researchers to assist their discussions with their supervisors and line managers. It will also be useful for staff in research offices, HR and equality and diversity specialists.

Students (and information for their Supervisors)

We allow students to take maternity, paternity, adoption, and shared parental leave and make provision for additional stipend to be paid where appropriate. Students may also be able to study on a part-time basis (Tier 4 students will be excluded from this however).

Maternity and paternity leave

- Research Council funded students are entitled to 52 weeks of maternity leave, and may also be eligible to take a period of shared parental leave. The first 26 weeks are paid at the full stipend rate. The following 13 weeks are paid at a level commensurate with employee entitlements of statutory maternity pay (£140.98 per week as of November 2017). This is c. 41% of the minimum doctoral stipend and will be paid in three equal instalments. The final 13 weeks are unpaid leave.
- Payments will be made at 6 months at full stipend rate, following by 3 months at the reduced rate.
- A student’s Expected Date of Confinement (EDC) must occur during the period of the award to be eligible for maternity leave pay.
- Partners are entitled to up to 10 days paid Ordinary Paternity Leave on full stipend which may be taken at any time during a partner’s pregnancy or within the three months following the birth. The period of funding will be extended by 10 days accordingly.
- There is no qualifying period of registration at the University for maternity, paternity, adoption, or shared parental leave to be taken. Students can take leave regardless of when they commenced their studies.
- There is no limit to the number of periods of Maternity, Ordinary Paternity, Shared Parental Leave or Adoption Leave that can be taken during a studentship.
- Students may opt to study part-time (at 60%) following a change in their personal circumstances, however only one change during the lifetime of their funding period is permitted under the Terms and Conditions of the Research Council.
- The period of support may be extended to cover the period of absence.
- Submission dates will be amended to take into account periods of maternity, paternity or adoption leave and if the student changes to part-time study.
• Students are expected to return to study for a minimum of 12 consecutive weeks. If a student does not return to study for at least 12 weeks, the university will claim back the 26 weeks of full stipend. The student will not have to pay back any statutory maternity pay.

Shared parental leave

• Partners may be entitled to up to 50 weeks of Shared Parental Leave (the first two weeks must be taken by the mother or primary carer); this may include paid and unpaid leave, depending on the individual circumstances. If eligible, Research Council funded students will receive payments outlined in the first bullet point above. In order to qualify both parents must be in receipt of an RCUK funded studentship at the University of Warwick. The 50 weeks of leave can be shared between both parents and can be taken in up to three separate blocks between the birth of the baby and the first birthday.

Adoption leave

• Adoption leave will be granted on the same basis as maternity leave.