RCUK Briefing on Maternity, Paternity, Shared Parental and Adoption Leave and Pay

This comprehensive briefing provides information relating to Maternity, Paternity, Shared Parental 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, shared parental and adoption leave and make provision for additional stipend to be paid where appropriate. Students are also allowed to study on a part-time basis.

- Research Council funded students are entitled to up to 26 weeks of maternity leave on full stipend and a further 26 weeks of unpaid maternity leave.
- Partners are entitled to up to 10 days paid Ordinary Paternity Leave on full stipend.
- Partners may be entitled to up to 50 weeks of Shared Parental Leave; this may include paid and unpaid leave, depending on the individual circumstances, any paid leave should be at full stipend.
- There is no qualifying period for maternity, paternity, shared parental or adoption leave eg a student can take leave regardless of when they commenced their studies.
- Students may opt to study part-time (at least 50%) following a change in their personal circumstances.
- The period of support may be extended to cover the period of absence.
- Submission dates can be amended for periods of maternity, paternity, shared parental or adoption leave and if the student changes to part-time study.
- There is no limit to the number of periods of Maternity, Ordinary Paternity, Shared Parental or Adoption Leave that can be taken during a studentship.
- Part-time awards should not be less than 50% of full-time.
- Research Organisations may approve a change in the mode of study from part-time to full-time or vice-versa eg for changes in personal circumstances.

Research Grants

This section has been modified as a result of changes to the Research Grant T&Cs in April 2015. The previous restriction precluding extensions to cover maternity, paternity, shared parental or adoption leave for Principal and Co Investigators has been removed.

Extensions

- After a research grant has started, the duration may be extended at no additional cost by an overall total of up to 12 months, subject to prior written approval.
- Extensions will be allowed where they are necessary to enable work to be completed following delays due to:
  - breaks or delays in the appointment of staff;
  - maternity, paternity, adoption, shared parental or paid sick leave;
  - extended jury service; or
  - changes from full-time to part-time working.
- In the case of other, exceptional, circumstances, the duration may be extended, at the discretion of the Research Council.
- Requests for extensions should be made via the Grant Maintenance facility in JeS once the required duration is known and before the grant ends.

Maternity, Paternity, Adoption and Parental Leave

- The research organisation will be compensated at the end of the grant to cover any additional net costs, that cannot be met within the cash limit, of paid maternity, paternity, adoption and parental leave for staff within the
Directly Incurred and Exceptions fund headings (excluding the principal and co-investigators, unless they are also research fellows or research assistants funded by the grant) if they fulfil the relevant qualifying conditions of the employing Research Organisation.

- The net cost is the amount paid to the individual less the amount the Research Organisation can recover for Statutory Maternity Pay and Statutory Adoption Pay from HMRC.
- Maternity, paternity, adoption and parental pay is payable by the Research Council only for directly incurred staff that are funded for 100% of their contracted time on the grant (apart from staff acting as principal or co-investigators unless they are also research fellows or research assistants funded by the grant).
- Grant funds, within the announced cash limit, may be used to meet the costs of making a substitute appointment and/or extending the grant to cover a period of maternity, paternity, adoption or parental leave for staff within the directly incurred and exceptions fund headings (excluding the principal and co-investigators, unless they are also research fellows or research assistants funded by the grant).
- The duration of a grant will be extended only if the period can be accommodated within the maximum period allowed for extensions. Directly Allocated and Indirect funds will not be increased as a result of such extensions.
- Research Grant funds may be used to meet the costs of paid maternity, paternity, parental and adoption leave only to the extent that it is taken during the original period of the grant.
- The Research Organisation will be responsible for any liability for maternity, paternity, parental and adoption leave pay for staff supported by the grant outside the original period of the grant. If, for example, the original end date of a grant falls while a member of research staff is part-way through her maternity leave, the Research Organisation will be responsible for that part of the maternity leave which is taken after the original end date.

Fellowship Grants:

We allow fellows to take maternity, paternity, shared parental and adoption leave and make provision for additional costs of this leave where appropriate. Fellows are allowed to work on a part time basis.

- After a fellowship grant has started, the duration may be extended to cover maternity leave, paternity leave, adoption leave, shared parental leave, extended jury service or paid sick leave for a Research Fellow in line with the terms and conditions of the fellow's employment. Otherwise, the conditions for extending Fellowship grants are the same as apply to research grants.
- Fellows are entitled to take maternity, paternity, adoption or parental leave in accordance with the terms and conditions of the fellow's employment.
- If requested, consideration will be given to allowing a fellowship grant to be placed in abeyance during the absence of the Research Fellow for maternity, paternity, adoption or parental leave, and the period of the fellowship extended by the period of leave.
- Consideration will be given to requests to continue the fellowship on a flexible or part-time basis to allow the Research Fellow to meet caring responsibilities.
- Requests for extensions should be made via the Grant Maintenance facility in JeS once the required duration is known and before the grant ends.

Other help

Universities have policies in place and provide advice about Maternity, Paternity, Shared Parental and Adoption leave; HR and the Research Office should be the initial contacts. For example:

Newcastle University Maternity Leave Managers Guidance: http://www.ncl.ac.uk/hr/assets/documents/leave-maternity-guidance_jb.pdf

Imperial College Maternity Mentors: http://www3.imperial.ac.uk/staffdevelopment/talentdevelopment/mentoring/maternity

Sheffield University Family Leave Toolkits: http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/hr/guidance/family/index