

Policy on Maternity, Paternity and Adoption Leave for Research Degree Students

Background

This Policy applies to research degree students who are registered for an award of the University in instances where the registered student

- 1) becomes pregnant.
- 2) has a partner who becomes pregnant.
- 3) chooses to adopt a child.

This Policy applies equally to the University's internal and collaborative provision, including arrangements for validated and partnership programmes, unless alternative arrangements are detailed in the Validation and Institutional Partnerships Handbook¹.

It is recognised that, where a research degree student is funded by a Research Council, this policy may exist alongside a Research Council policy covering the same issues. Where possible, Boards of Studies and Research Supervisors should follow both policies; however, where there is a conflict the policy of the Research Council should be followed for the aspects that conflict.

Suspension of studies

Any research degree student registered for an award of the University is entitled to the following provisions:

- In the event of maternity leave/maternal adoption: a period of suspension of studies, normally up to a maximum of twelve months, at the request of the student.
- In the event of paternity leave/paternal adoption: a period of up to 13 weeks' unpaid leave which can be taken at any time during the pregnancy and/or within 12 months of childbirth.

In all cases, the School will need to obtain documentary evidence from the student, as is required of staff, in order to confirm leave arrangements.

Funding provisions

Any research degree student who holds a studentship under the University studentship scheme is entitled to the following provisions:

- In the event of maternity leave/maternal adoption: a four month period of maternity leave during which bursary payments will be continued (no fees will be payable); this will be added to the three year studentship period.
- In the event of paternity leave/paternal adoption: two weeks of paid leave without an extension of the award at any time during the pregnancy or within three months of childbirth.

Where possible, and to ensure a consistent approach across the institution, research students funded via School-based studentships should be entitled to the same provisions.

Implementation

Boards of Studies and Senior Tutors for Research are responsible for the effective implementation of this Policy, including ensuring that students are treated consistently.

¹ Where the term Board of Studies is used this should be taken as synonymous with Course Boards for validated programmes