



Student parental leave policy

Scope

This policy covers Maternity Leave, Paternity Leave and Shared Parental Leave for all postgraduate students registered in the department.

1) Full university policy

The department follows the [University Policy on Student Maternity, Extended Paternity, Adoption and Shared Parental Leave](#) which is available on the [Student Gateway](#) along with other information for Student parents.

2) Payment of stipend to post graduate research students

If the student taking maternity leave, or shared parental leave, receives a stipend to fund their studies and this is suspended by the sponsor, then the department will pay the stipend amount for the period for which it is suspended, subject to the qualifying conditions below:

At the qualifying week (15 weeks before the expected week of childbirth) the student must:

- be registered as a student with the University; and
- have been registered as a student with the University for at least 26 weeks; and
- provide their department with the correct notification of her intention to take leave, and
- intend to return to their studies following the birth of their baby.

Although individuals funded under these terms and conditions do not have a statutory entitlement to maternity, paternity or adoption leave, the department will match the [UKRI studentship terms and conditions](#) and provide funding for leave entitlements which mirror the statutory schemes in force at the time.

Departmental students are entitled to 52 weeks of maternity-equivalent leave if the expected week of childbirth will occur during the period of their course. The earliest Maternity leave can commence is 11 weeks before the expected week of childbirth. The main adopter of a child placed during a studentship is also entitled to 52 weeks of leave.

Where a student takes a period of leave equivalent to maternity leave, or adoption leave taken by the main adopter only, Students will have the right to the following payment terms. The first 26 weeks should be paid at full stipend rate, pro-rated as necessary for part time Students. The following 13 weeks should be paid at a level commensurate with statutory maternity pay. The final 13 weeks are not paid.

Students who would be entitled to paternity leave under the statutory scheme are entitled to up to two weeks paid Ordinary Paternity Leave on full stipend. Ordinary Paternity Leave cannot start before the birth and must end within 56 days of the birth.

Shared parental leave may be funded depending on the eligibility of both the student and their parenting partner. Students wishing to explore this option should discuss with the Director of Graduate Studies at the earliest opportunity. Departmental funding will mirror shared parental pay where there is no funding available from the sponsor.

In respect of birth parents, eligible students are those who will share primary responsibility for the child with its birth mother. In respect of adoptive parents, eligible students are those who are the spouse,



partner or civil partner or the primary adopter. Students are only entitled to take one of either maternity/adoption-equivalent leave or unpaid parental leave per birth/placement of a child.

3) Unpaid Parental Leave Provision

The department also provides an unpaid parental leave scheme – this is separate from maternity, paternity or shared parental leave – it is the right to take up some unpaid time off work to look after their child.

Under the unpaid parental leave scheme eligible students will be entitled to an extended period of unpaid parental leave, up to a maximum of 50 weeks, with their studentship extended accordingly.

Unpaid parental leave must be completed within 12 months of the birth or placement of the child. This leave may be taken in up to three blocks of leave or all at once.

4) Payment of salary

If the student taking parental leave is salaried by the department, and therefore an employee as well as a student, then the departmental parental leave policies apply; full information on these can be found on the intranet here: <https://www.phc.ox.ac.uk/intranet/hr-and-personal-development/parental-leave>

5) Application

This section applies to all students regardless of employment status. Students should discuss their plans with their supervisors as soon as they feel comfortable to do so (the earlier this is done the better as your supervisor can support you and ensure you receive time off from work to attend any medical appointments). Formal applications for suspension of status for maternity, extended paternity and adoption leave should be submitted on a [GSO.17b](#) form as soon as the need for such an application is identified.