University of Bristol Maternity, Paternity and Adoption Leave Policy for Research Students

Maternity Leave and Stipend payments

1. Up to 52 weeks of maternity leave may be taken by research students registered at the University of Bristol. The period of academic suspension is approved by the Faculty’s Graduate Dean.

2. Any full time postgraduate research student in receipt of University of Bristol maintenance funding, granted a period of academic suspension on the grounds of maternity leave, will be eligible for a six month payment of her normal stipend during this suspension. This includes all University funded students, i.e., not only those funded by the UOB PhD scholarship funding, but also those funded through departmental and faculty and RCUK Training Grants. It is for note, that the terms and conditions of some external funders do not cover maternity payments and it is the student’s responsibility to check this with their funding provider. In the case of an external funder not providing maternity payments, the University is not liable to provide any payment during student’s maternity leave.

3. Students who are registered at less than 100% will receive their standard pro-rata stipend payments (for the same six month period as above).

4. Students who are self-funded (and those entitled to tuition fee only awards), are entitled to the periods of leave detailed within this policy, but will not be eligible for any financial support from the University.

5. Students requiring a UKVI Tier 4 visa to attend the University of Bristol are advised to seek advice from the International Advice and Support Team when considering a suspension a study on the grounds of maternity leave.

6. The student will apply for a suspension of study in the normal way. However all applications should be submitted on a MATB1 form. A MATB1 form is not normally issued until 15 weeks before the expected week of birth (and is normally provided by the midwife). Wherever possible, a student should inform the University as early as possible of her expected due date.

Paternity leave and stipend payments

7. Recipients of University of Bristol funding, as outlined above, may also take paternity leave. There are two types of paternity leave: **Ordinary Paternity Leave** and **Additional Paternity Leave**.

8. All research students registered at the University of Bristol are eligible for Ordinary Paternity Leave, if they are the biological father of the child, or the mother's husband or partner (including same sex relationships) and they must provide a written statement from the mother/partner to confirm this. Ordinary Paternity leave permits the individual to take up to 10 days leave on full stipend. Ordinary Paternity Leave must be taken in blocks of not less than 1 week.
9. Additional Paternity Leave is a mechanism through which fathers may share their partner's entitlement to maternity leave with them, and is available to those who meet the following eligibility criteria:

- They must be the biological father of the child, or the mother's husband or partner (including same sex relationships) and they must provide a written statement from the mother/partner to confirm this;
- They must be taking the leave to look after the child;
- The child's mother must have qualified for statutory maternity leave or pay; or statutory adoption leave or pay or maternity allowance, or have qualified for the payment of a stipend during maternity leave under a policy such as this, (e.g. if she is also a Research Student);
- The child's mother must have returned to work and must no longer be in receipt of maternity/adoption pay or allowance, or must have returned to her research/studies if she is also a Research Student, (the start and end dates of their partner's leave must be provided);
- Their partner must have some entitlement to maternity leave remaining;
- The terms and conditions of their grant must not specifically exclude the taking of such leave.

10. The number of weeks that may be taken as Additional Paternity Leave will depend on how many of the mother's 52 weeks of maternity leave she has remaining, but will in any event be capped at a maximum entitlement of 26 weeks. Additional Paternity Leave must be taken as a continuous block and may not end later than the child's first birthday.

11. Qualifying students in receipt of RCUK Training Grants, University Research Scholarships and funding from other sources will continue to be paid at full stipend for any Additional Paternity Leave taken in the 26 weeks following the birth of the child, but any weeks which fall after week 26 will be unpaid.

12. Students who are self-funded (and those entitled to tuition fee only awards), are entitled to the periods of leave detailed within this policy, but will not be eligible for any financial support from the University.

13. Students requiring a UKVI Tier 4 visa to attend the University of Bristol are advised to seek advice from the International Advice and Support Team when considering a suspension a study on the grounds of paternity leave.

14. The student will apply for a suspension of study in the normal way. However all applications should be submitted with the statement from the mother confirming that he is the biological father, or mother's husband or partner. In addition, the student must also provide the contact details of the mother's employer (to check when the mother's entitlement to maternity leave/pay ends). A form is available for this purpose.

Adoption Leave

15. Equal entitlements will be granted for new adoptive parents; students should make contact with their Faculty Graduate team in the first instance.
Extension of Studentship End Date

16. The studentship end date and expected submission date will normally be extended by a period equal to the period of maternity or paternity leave taken.

Repayment of Stipend during Maternity/Paternity Leave

17. Should a student not return to their studies after the period of suspension in respect of maternity or paternity leave, any stipend paid during that period will normally be recovered by the University.

Notes for Staff

18. Staff should refer to the following document to ensure that all appropriate measures are put in place for a pregnant student and her subsequent period of maternity leave: https://www.bris.ac.uk/equalityanddiversity/act/protected/pregandmat/studentmatstaff.html

19. After the suspension is agreed and signed by the Graduate Dean, the Faculty Office should send a copy of the relevant paperwork to the School and the Student Funding Office to enable the appropriate administrative processes to be updated to reflect the change to the student’s registration status.

Jane Fitzwalter
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