

# Maternity Pay and Shared Parental Leave for Research Students

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 At its meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2018, University Executive Board (UEB) approved an agreed Policy for Maternity Pay and Shared Parental Leave for doctoral researchers at the University of Southampton.
- 1.2 This Policy brings into line those research students who are directly funded by the University of Southampton (including those who receive funding and where the University administers the payments as part of an external (non-charitable) contract) with the conditions of those research students who are funded by UKRI.
- 1.3 There is no general legal obligation to provide maternity pay and shared parental leave to research students unless they are employees of the University of Southampton. Research students who undertake teaching activities are not considered employees of the University (see the *Research Students Who Teach Policy* available on the [Quality Handbook](#)).

## 2. Research students covered by this policy

- 2.1 Maternity pay and shared parental leave (including adoption leave) will be paid to full-time and part-time research students within the following categories.
  - 2.1.1 **UKRI-funded research students**  
Research students in this category are covered by UKRI funding arrangements. UKRI requires that payments for maternity pay and shared parental leave to be funded from the existing Doctoral Training Programme/Centre for Doctoral Training (DTP/CDT) allocation (see UKRI [Terms and Conditions](#)).
  - 2.1.2 **Mayflower scholars**  
The stipend and maternity pay and shared parental leave that Mayflower Scholars receive is covered by UKRI Terms and Conditions.
  - 2.1.3 **Presidential (VC) scholarships**  
Funding is accounted for within the central Vice-Chancellor's allocation. A condition of faculties' use of Presidential Scholarships is that maternity pay and shared parental leave is covered by UKRI Terms and Conditions.
  - 2.1.4 **EU-funded research students**  
Research students on Marie Curie ITN are considered employees of the University of Southampton and are covered by the UK's legal obligations for maternity pay and shared parental leave.
  - 2.1.5 **Research students directly funded by faculties and/or schools**  
Research students in this category are in full- or part-receipt of their fees, stipend or research training support grant (RTSG) from general University/Faculty funds.
  - 2.1.6 **Research Students indirectly funded by non-charitable external organisations**  
Research students in this category receive funding from the University as part of a contract that is funded by external organisations/businesses/governments not covered above and who are not charities.

### 3. Research students not covered by this policy

- 3.1 Research students who are funded directly and entirely by external organisations are not covered by this Policy.
- 3.2 Research students who are self-funded are not covered by this Policy.
- 3.3 Research students who undertake teaching activities (see paragraph 1.3) and who are not categorised within paragraphs 2.1.1 to 2.1.6, are not covered by this Policy.
- 3.4 Faculties may wish to negotiate maternity pay and shared parental leave contingencies with external organisations at the point of negotiating the contract.

### 4. Research students funded by Charities

- 4.1 Maternity pay and shared parental leave may, or may not, be paid to full-time and part-time research students who are funded by charities.
- 4.2 Entitlement to maternity pay and shared parental leave for research students in this category very much depends upon the named charity.
  - 4.2.1 For example, [Cancer Research UK](#) applies the UKRI MPSPL policy for those research students not employed by the University.
  - 4.2.2 The [Leverhulme Trust](#) also permits maternity pay and shared parental leave for research students.
- 4.3 In other situations, if the University administers the research student's funding (as in category 2.1.6), the research student should be considered as if UKRI-funded.
- 4.4 If the University does not administer the research student's funding (as in 2.1.6) and the charity does not impose any requirement for maternity pay and shared parental leave on the University as part of that funding, then no maternity pay and shared parental leave will be payable by the University.

### 5. Terms and Conditions

- 5.1 This Policy applies to all maternity, paternity and shared parental leave requests from those research students from categories in section 2 above, made on or after 26<sup>th</sup> November 2018.
- 5.2 Maternity, paternity and shared parental leave for research students who are covered by the Policy will follow the UKRI [Terms and Conditions](#) of the training grant in force at the time of application.
- 5.3 As at February 2019, the University policy is that:
  - 5.3.1 the Policy covers maternity, paternity, shared parental or adoption leave;
  - 5.3.2 students covered by the policy are entitled to 52 weeks of maternity or shared parental leave;
  - 5.3.3 there is no minimum qualifying period;
  - 5.3.4 the first 26 weeks of maternity pay and shared parental leave will be paid at full stipend, the next 13 weeks at 41% of full stipend, and the final 13 weeks will be unpaid;
  - 5.3.5 research students who are partners are entitled to 10 days paid ordinary leave on full stipend, but up to 50 weeks unpaid shared parental leave;
  - 5.3.6 payments will be made for the same period and level for research students in full- and part-time registration at the University;

- 5.3.7 payments will be based on the national UKRI full-time minimum doctoral stipend (regardless of partial- or full-funding level by the University);
  - 5.3.8 faculties that pay enhanced stipends paid to research students from University (administered) funds are responsible for the extra payments beyond the maternity, paternity and shared parental leave rates payable based on UKRI minimum stipend.
  - 5.3.9 research students undertaking maternity, paternity, shared parental or adoption leave must suspend their studies.
  - 5.3.10 any research student who has been in receipt of maternity, paternity and shared parental leave who fails to return to study will be required to repay the maternity, paternity and shared parental leave pay that they have been issued. As administrators of the scheme, Faculties should pursue such students as they would any debtor to the University.
  - 5.3.11 for those research students in receipt of combined funding sources, the funds to cover the maternity, paternity and shared parental leave should be drawn in proportion from the relevant accounts.
- 5.4 Payments will only apply to those research students covered by the Policy who:
- 5.4.1 Are still within the maximum candidature permitted by the University regulations for their programme (see the [Regulations for Research Degrees](#)).
  - 5.4.2 are still in receipt of funding as per the categories as set out above;
  - 5.4.3 have not yet submitted a thesis for final examination.
- 5.5 Research students who have a tier 4 visa to study at the University are required to comply with all necessary conditions and are encouraged to consult the [Visa and Immigration Student Advice Service \(VISAS team\)](#) for guidance on how this Policy may affect their immigration status.
- 5.6 The UKRI [guidance, terms and conditions on training grants](#) provides further information, as does the [UKRI briefing on maternity, shared parental leave and adoption leave](#).

## 6. Administration

- 6.1 UEB has agreed that the administration and budgeting for MPSPL will be conducted at Faculty level.
- 6.2 Faculty Graduate Schools must make suitable arrangements for funding and processing maternity, paternity and shared parental leave and pay.
- 6.3 Faculties must report any issues arising and their annual expenditure on MPSPL to the Doctoral College to enable the scheme to be reviewed.
- 6.4 This policy will be placed in the University section of the doctoral researcher handbook.

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