

## **RCUK Briefing on Maternity, Paternity and Adoption Leave and Pay**

This comprehensive briefing provides information relating to Maternity, Paternity 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 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 26 weeks of maternity leave on full stipend and a further 26 weeks of unpaid maternity leave.
- Fathers are entitled to up to 10 days paid Ordinary Paternity Leave on full stipend.
- Fathers may be entitled to up to 26 weeks of Additional Paternity 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 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 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, Additional Paternity 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 Staff contracted 100% of their time on grants**

We allow research staff funded for 100% of their contracted time on a grant to take maternity, paternity and adoption leave and make provision for additional costs of maternity where appropriate. Research Staff may also be employed on a part time basis.

- The duration of the grant may be extended, by an overall total of up to 12 months to cover periods of maternity, paternity or adoption leave.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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 the grant, of paid maternity, paternity, adoption and parental leave for staff that are within the Directly Incurred and Exceptions fund headings, provided that they fulfil the relevant qualifying conditions of the employing Research Organisation.
- The net cost that can be drawn from the grant 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.
- These additional costs should be claimed as necessary at the end of the research grant under the fund heading 'directly Incurred Absence' on the final expenditure statement, with an attachment detailing the type of absence, date and cost.
- The Research Organisation should have systems in place to ensure that these additional costs are assigned to appropriate budgets.

- 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 eg that part of the paid leave that is after the original end date of the grant is the responsibility of the university, even when the grant is extended, and cannot be claimed from the grant.
- The Research Councils expect the Research Organisation to manage the resources on a grant in such a way that it is completed within an agreed timescale and budget and therefore extensions are not given if the staff employed on a grant change from full-time to part-time employment or if staff are moved from one project to another. The RO and the investigator should recruit additional staff resource including part time resource as necessary to complete the project.

## **Fellowship Grants**

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

- The duration may be extended to cover maternity leave, paternity leave, adoption leave, and parental leave for a Research Fellow in line with the terms and conditions of the fellow's employment.
- 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 fellows.
- 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.
- 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 and if agreed the duration of the grant will extended pro rata.

## **Principal and Co-investigators on grants and pooled research staff and technicians**

The Research Councils will not cover the costs of maternity, paternity or sick leave for Principal and Co Investigators<sup>1</sup>, or pooled staff. These costs are often included in the calculation of indirect costs, but are the responsibility of the university as the employer.

Grants are not extended to cover the maternity, paternity or adoption leave of Principal and Co Investigators<sup>1</sup>, and pooled staff, on grants.

If both the Research Organisation and Investigator agree that there are exceptional circumstances that would pose a risk to the successful outcome of the grant by not allowing the extension of the duration, for the maternity leave of investigators, they should contact their RC programme contact to discuss.

## **Other help**

Universities have policies in place and provide advice about Maternity, Paternity 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](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>

<sup>1</sup> unless they are also research fellows or research assistants funded on the grant.