

Paternal (Maternity/Paternity/Shared/Adoption) Leave Policy for NTU PhD candidates (PGRs) with Stipends.

Doctoral candidates are entitled to 52 weeks of maternity or shared parental leave. The first 26 weeks should be paid at full stipend rate, pro-rated as necessary for part time doctoral candidates. The following 13 weeks should be paid at a level commensurate with statutory maternity pay. The final 13 weeks are not paid. Partners are entitled to up to 10 days paid Ordinary Paternity Leave on full stipend. Partners may be entitled to up to 50 weeks of Shared Parental Leave; this may include paid and unpaid leave, depending on the individual circumstances, any paid leave should be at full stipend. Adoption leave should be granted on the same basis as maternity leave. There is no qualifying period for maternity, paternity, adoption or shared parental leave. Additionally, stipend end dates should be updated to reflect the period of leave. While recognising that doctoral candidates are not employees, the Maternity/Paternity/Shared/Adoption Leave should be calculated on the same basis as an employee with an employment contract.

In the case where PGR candidates are also members of NTU Staff then please use the associated [NTU Policies](#).

Maternity Leave

Funding source	Leave Entitlement	Stipend Payments
UKRI-funded	52 weeks	26 weeks full stipend capped at UKRI rates followed by 13 weeks at reduced SMP rate and 13 weeks unpaid. To be paid in 9 monthly instalments as follows: 6 months at full stipend 3 months at SMP rate
University-funded	52 weeks	26 weeks full stipend capped at UKRI rates followed by 13 weeks at reduced SMP rate and 13 weeks unpaid. To be paid in 9 monthly instalments as follows: 6 months at full stipend 3 months at SMP rate
Department-funded	52 weeks	26 weeks full stipend capped at UKRI rates followed by 13 weeks at reduced SMP rate and 13 weeks unpaid. To be paid in 9 monthly instalments as follows: 6 months at full stipend 3 months at SMP rate
Externally-funded	52 weeks	Payments at the discretion of the funder, to be requested by the department
Self-funded / fees only award	52 weeks	No payment

If an NTU PGR Studentship or bursary holder becomes pregnant such that the expected date of maternity leave will occur during the period of their Award, the University will allow up to six months paid maternity leave without the level of their Award being reduced.

The total period of financial support available to doctoral candidates will not be extended beyond the usual 36 months plus the period of up to nine months maternity leave. Please note that such paid and unpaid periods of leave must be taken consecutively. If a doctoral candidate chooses not to take the full twelve months at the time of their pregnancy, they will not be able to take the remaining period at a later date.

It is the responsibility of the doctoral candidate, if they wish to claim maternity pay, to apply directly to the NTU Doctoral School. This application must be supported by a copy of their MATB1 form, which should be obtained from a GP or midwife.

All doctoral candidates in receipt of a Studentship/Sponsorship from an external funding body (e.g. Research Councils, Charities and Government / Embassies) should refer to the terms and conditions of their funding for details of what periods of leave and funding support they may be entitled to.

Doctoral candidates who are self-funded, funded directly by a third party e.g. an international sponsor or in receipt of tuition fee only awards or fee bursaries, are entitled to the periods of leave detailed within this policy, but will not be eligible for any financial support from the University.

Notes

- i. The earliest a doctoral candidate can start maternity leave is 11 weeks before the expected week of childbirth. However it is recognised that for health and safety reasons it may be necessary for doctoral candidates to cease some activities earlier if they may present a hazard to pregnant doctoral candidates.
- ii. The maternity leave period will automatically begin if doctoral candidates are unable to continue their studies due to a pregnancy related illness within the four week period before the expected week of childbirth.
- iii. Doctoral candidates should not return to study within two weeks of childbirth for health and safety reasons. Doctoral candidates wishing to return to their studies before their planned return date should notify the NTU Doctoral School at least 8 weeks before the new return date.
- iv. The period of maternity leave cannot be broken by other types of absences. If a doctoral candidate becomes ill during the maternity period, the absence is treated as part of the maternity leave up to the end of that maternity leave period.
- v. International doctoral candidates sponsored by the University to obtain a visa to enter the UK should contact the International Student Support team within Student Support Services (int.support@ntu.ac.uk) if they plan to take maternity or adoption leave as there may be implications regarding their visa status. Depending on the circumstances, the University may have to report to the UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) any visa sponsored doctoral candidate who takes leave of absence. The UKVI may subsequently require doctoral candidates to leave the UK during their leave of absence. International doctoral candidates should also inform their funder of their pregnancy or planned leave and comply with any requirements made by that body.

Guidance for Pregnant doctoral candidates

Following confirmation of pregnancy, doctoral candidates should **advise from their supervisory team as soon as possible** for health and safety reasons. The Postgraduate Research Tutor/Course Leader and supervisor should meet with the doctoral candidate to **complete a pregnancy planning form** to include any special arrangements that might need to be made while the doctoral candidate is pregnant, the date on which the doctoral candidate wishes to suspend their studies and start their maternity leave, and likely date of return to study. A request for suspension is made through the NTU Doctoral School Progression and Monitoring App and the documentation required to be uploaded, with an electronic copy also required to be

retained by the doctoral candidate.

Doctoral candidates must inform the NTU Doctoral School that they are pregnant no later than **15 weeks before the expected week of childbirth.**

The University is required to protect the Health and Safety of all doctoral candidates and others, including pregnant doctoral candidates and new mothers. Once the doctoral candidate has notified the University that they are pregnant, **a pregnancy risk assessment should be carried out by** the Health and Safety Officer from their own Academic School.

In consultation with their supervisory team, all reasonably practicable measures should be taken to prevent exposure to risks through removal of hazards or implementation of controls. If a risk remains which could damage the health and safety of new or expectant mothers, the supervisory team will take appropriate measures to make sure the doctoral candidate is not exposed to that risk. This may include making appropriate adjustments to the research project. In some cases, if doctoral candidates are working in conditions that may be hazardous, the doctoral candidate may have to suspend their studies prior to Week 29 of pregnancy. Careful consideration will need to be made as to whether the doctoral candidate can undertake field-work, placements or laboratory work, or study abroad, whilst pregnant. Where necessary, health and safety and/or medical advice should be sought.

Complete the Application for suspension / extension (RD5SEW) form through the NTU Doctoral School Online Progression and Monitoring App. When a doctoral candidate suspends their studies for reasons of pregnancy and maternity leave the doctoral candidate will not be charged fees for the period of suspension. To ensure that the University's financial records are kept in alignment with the doctoral candidate's period of suspension it is essential that the doctoral candidate applies for the suspension of their studies.

A doctoral candidate may take time away from their studies to attend medical appointments, although it is suggested that they try and arrange these outside timetabled teaching periods. **Where pregnancy impacts upon their health, the doctoral candidate should keep their tutor or supervisor informed of the situation.** The doctoral candidate may wish to apply for special considerations if pregnancy has impacted upon their studies, in terms of assessment and monitoring points. If doctoral candidates would like advice about this, they should contact student.support@ntu.ac.uk.

Doctoral candidates may wish to reach an agreement about coming in on specific days during their period of leave in order to maintain contact, but there is no requirement to do so. Such dates/arrangements can be detailed in the Pregnancy Planning Form, otherwise it is expected that the doctoral candidate **contacts their tutor or supervisor at least a month prior to their return to study date** to discuss the planned date of return and how their return to study will be managed.

Paternity Leave

Paternity leave is granted to doctoral candidates whose partner is pregnant and they are one of the following:

- Father of the child,
- Husband or civil partner,
- Living with the mother in an enduring family relationship including same sex couples, but is not an immediate relative of the mother.

If an NTU PGR studentship or bursary holder's partner becomes pregnant such that the expected date of maternity leave will occur during the period of their Award, the University will allow two weeks paid paternity leave without the level of their Award being reduced.

It is the responsibility of the doctoral candidate to apply directly to the NTU Doctoral School for Paternity Leave. Doctoral candidates should attach medical documentary evidence of their

partner's pregnancy or a copy of the child's birth certificate / medical certificate.

All doctoral candidates in receipt of a studentship/Sponsorship from an external funding body (e.g. Research Councils, Charities and Government / Embassies) should refer to the terms and conditions of their funding for details of what periods of leave and funding support that the doctoral candidate may be entitled to for paternity leave.

Shared Parental Leave

Shared Parental Leave is a mechanism through which the entitlement to maternity leave may be shared, and is available to those in receipt of stipend funding and who meet the following eligibility criteria:

- To qualify for share parental leave the doctoral candidate must share the care of the child with either: their husband, wife, civil partner, adopter, the child's other parent or their partner;
- 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 doctoral candidate);
 - 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 doctoral candidate, (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.

The number of weeks that may be taken as shared parental 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 50 weeks (inclusive of both paid and unpaid entitlement). Shared Parental Leave must be taken as a continuous block and may not end later than the child's first birthday. While recognising that doctoral candidates are not employees, the Shared Parental Leave should be calculated on the same basis as an employee with an employment contract (excluding the qualifying period). Further information can be found on the government website: <https://www.gov.uk/shared-parental-leave-and-pay-employer-guide/overview>

Doctoral candidates 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.

Adoption leave

If an NTU PGR Studentship bursary holder adopts a child during the period of their award, the entitlement for adoption leave should be granted on the same basis as maternity leave. It is the doctoral candidate's responsibility to apply directly to the NTU Doctoral School. This application must be supported by official documentation.

All doctoral candidates in receipt of a studentship / sponsorship from an external funding body (e.g. Research Councils, Charities and Government / Embassies) should refer to the terms and conditions of their funding for details of what periods of leave and funding support they may be entitled to.

Sources of Support and Advice for doctoral candidates,

Student Support Services:

Support for pregnant doctoral candidates and new mothers – Student Support Officer, Tel: 0115 848 3290 or email transition.support@ntu.ac.uk

Information for doctoral candidate's Parents:

www.ntu.ac.uk/student_services/individual_support/students_with_caring_responsibilities/Student_parents/index.html

Information on Financial matters for Pregnant doctoral candidates:

www.ntu.ac.uk/student_services/fees_finance/changes_affecting_finance/having_a_baby/index.html

Multifaith Chaplaincy Team

Website: www.ntu.ac.uk/faith

Email: faith@ntu.ac.uk

Tel: 0115 848 3279 or 0115 848 2305

The University Safety Office

Advice, guidance and support for the completion of the pregnancy risk assessment. Email the Safety & Wellbeing Team

https://www4.ntu.ac.uk/hsw/about_us/occupational_health/contacts/index.html.
www.ntu.ac.uk/hsw/index.html

Health and Safety Executive

Government guidelines for health and safety for new and expectant mothers

www.hse.gov.uk/mothers/

RCUK

Conditions of Research Council Training Grants

<https://www.ukri.org/files/legacy/news/training-grants-january-2018-pdf/>

Nottingham Trent Students Union

Information and Advice Service,

Appointments may be booked online at: <http://www.trentstudents.org/seeanadvisor>

Website: <https://www.trentstudents.org/ias>

E-mail: sac@su.ntu.ac.uk

Tel: 0115 848 6260

Useful documents

Pregnancy Risk Assessment Form

Pregnancy Planning Form

Can be found at <https://www.ntu.ac.uk/research/research-degrees-at-ntu/doctoral-school>