

## **NTU Policy for Pregnancy and Maternity/Paternity/Adoption Leave for Postgraduate Research Students**

### **Maternity Leave**

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. Financial support for any time beyond six months should be sought from the School/Division in which the student is based.

The total period of financial support available to students will not be extended beyond the usual 36 months plus the period of up to six months maternity leave. Students may also apply for up to a further six months suspension of their Award (unpaid) because of the pregnancy. Please note that such paid and unpaid periods of leave must be taken consecutively. If a student 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.

The above is consistent with RCUK Conditions of Research Council Training Grants which states:

“58. Research Council funded students are entitled to up to 26 weeks of maternity or adoption leave on full stipend and a further 26 weeks of unpaid maternity leave.”

It is the student's responsibility, if they wish to claim maternity pay, to apply directly to the Graduate School. This application must be supported by a copy of their MAT B1 form, which should be obtained from a GP or midwife.

All students 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.

### **Notes**

- i. The earliest a student 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 students to cease some activities earlier if they may present a hazard to pregnant students.
- ii. The maternity leave period will automatically begin if students are unable to continue their studies due to a pregnancy related illness within the 4 - week period before the expected week of childbirth.
- iii. Students should not return to study within 2 weeks of childbirth for health and safety reasons. Students wishing to return to their studies before their planned return date should notify the Graduate 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 student 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 students 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](mailto: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 student who takes leave of absence. The UKVI may subsequently require students to leave the UK during their leave of absence. International students should also inform their funder of their pregnancy or planned leave and comply with any requirements made by that body.

## Guidance for Pregnant Students

Following confirmation of pregnancy, you should **advise your supervisory team as soon as possible** for health and safety reasons.

Your tutor/supervisor should meet with you to **complete a pregnancy planning form** to include any special arrangements that might need to be made while you are pregnant, the date on which you wish to suspend your studies and start your maternity leave, and likely date of return to study. This will be placed on your student file, and a copy given to you.

You must tell the Graduate School that you are pregnant no later than 15 weeks before your expected week of childbirth.

The University is required to protect the Health and Safety of all research students and others, including pregnant students and new mothers. Once you have notified the University that you are pregnant, **a pregnancy risk assessment should be carried out by** the Local Safety Officer from in your academic School.

In consultation with your 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 they are not exposed to that risk. This may include making appropriate adjustments to your research project. In some cases, if you are working in conditions that may be hazardous, you may have to suspend your studies prior to the 29<sup>th</sup> week of pregnancy. Careful consideration will need to be made as to whether you 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 and return to the Graduate School.** When you suspend your studies for reasons of pregnancy and maternity leave you will not be charged fees for the period of suspension. To ensure that our financial records are kept in alignment with your period of suspension it is essential that you apply for suspension of your studies.

You may take time away from your studies to attend medical appointments, although it is suggested that you try and arrange these outside timetabled teaching periods. **Where pregnancy impacts upon your health, you should keep your tutor or supervisor informed of the situation.** You may wish to apply for special considerations if pregnancy has impacted upon your studies, in terms of assessment. If you would like advice about this contact [student.support@ntu.ac.uk](mailto:student.support@ntu.ac.uk).

You should **contact your tutor or supervisor at least a month prior to your return to study date** to discuss your planned date of return and how your return to study will be managed. Under the University's regulations, suspension for a period of more than 2 years will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.

## **Paternity Leave**

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 2 weeks paid paternity leave without the level of their Award being reduced. Partners may be entitled to up to 50 weeks of Shared Paternity, which may include paid and unpaid leave, depending on individual circumstances.

The above is consistent with RCUK Conditions of Research Council Training Grants which states:

"58. 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."

It is the student's responsibility to apply directly to the Graduate School. You should attach medical documentary evidence of your partner's pregnancy or a copy of your child's birth certificate / medical certificate.

Paternity leave is granted to students 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.

All students 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 you may be entitled to for paternity leave.

## **Adoption leave**

If an NTU PGR studentship bursary holder adopts a child during the period of their award, the University will allow up to six months paid adoption leave without the level of the award being reduced. Financial support for any time beyond six months should be sought from the School/Division in which the student is based.

The total period of financial support available to students will not be extended beyond the usual 36 months plus the period of up to six months maternity leave. Students may also apply for up to a further six months' suspension of their Award (unpaid) because of the adoption, providing a total period of paid and unpaid adoption leave of up to twelve months. Please note that such paid and unpaid periods of leave must be taken consecutively. If a student chooses not to take the full twelve months at the time of their adoption, they will not be able to take the remaining period at a later date.

It is the student's responsibility to apply directly to the Graduate School. This application must be supported by official documentation.

All students 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 Students,

### Student Support Services:

Support for pregnant students and new mothers – Student Support Officer, Tel: 0115 848 3290 or email [transition.support@ntu.ac.uk](mailto:transition.support@ntu.ac.uk)

Information for Student Parents:

[www.ntu.ac.uk/student\\_services/individual\\_support/students\\_with\\_caring\\_responsibilities/Student\\_parents/index.html](http://www.ntu.ac.uk/student_services/individual_support/students_with_caring_responsibilities/Student_parents/index.html)

Information on Financial matters for Pregnant Students:

[www.ntu.ac.uk/student\\_services/fees\\_finance/changes\\_affecting\\_finance/having\\_a\\_baby/index.html](http://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](http://www.ntu.ac.uk/faith)

Email: [faith@ntu.ac.uk](mailto: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 Occupational Health Department [HASOCHEnquires@ntu.ac.uk](mailto:HASOCHEnquires@ntu.ac.uk).

[www.ntu.ac.uk/hsw/index.html](http://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/](http://www.hse.gov.uk/mothers/)

### RCUK

Conditions of Research Council Training Grants

<http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/RCUK->

[prod/assets/documents/documents/TermsConditionsTrainingGrants.pdf](http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/RCUK-prod/assets/documents/documents/TermsConditionsTrainingGrants.pdf)

### Students Union

Information and Advice Service,

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

Website: <http://www.trentstudents.org/sac>

E-mail: [sac@su.ntu.ac.uk](mailto:sac@su.ntu.ac.uk)

Tel: 0115 848 6200

### Useful documents

Application for suspension via the Doctoral School Monitoring app	<a href="https://www.ntu.ac.uk/research/research-degrees-at-ntu/doctoral-school">https://www.ntu.ac.uk/research/research-degrees-at-ntu/doctoral-school</a>
Pregnancy Risk Assessment Form	 NTU Pregnancy Risk Assessment Form.doc
Pregnancy Planning Form	 Pregnancy planning form.docx