

## Postgraduate Researcher (PGR) Family Leave Procedure

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### 1. Introduction and Purpose

- 1.1 This procedure outlines the process for postgraduate researchers (PGRs) to apply for time away from their research, including for Maternity or Adoption Leave, Partner's or Paternity Leave, Neonatal Care Leave, and Unpaid Parental Leave.

### 2. Scope and definitions

- 2.1 This procedure applies to all full-time and part-time PGRs as well as relevant staff at the University of Manchester.
- 2.2 This procedure should be read alongside the [Postgraduate Researcher \(PGR\) Change of Circumstance Policy](#), the [PGR Interruption to Programme Procedure](#) and/or the [PGR Extension to Programme Procedure](#) and/or the [PGR Submission Pending Policy](#).
- 2.3 PGRs who are members of staff, except those on a casual employment contract (e.g., Teaching Assistants) at The University of Manchester, should follow the appropriate [Directorate of People](#) policy.

### 3. Maternity and Adoption Leave

#### Eligibility

- 3.1 All PGRs registered at the University of Manchester and those in an approved submission pending period are eligible to take up to 52 weeks of Maternity Leave by interrupting their programme or extending their submission pending period, if they are:
- the person who will give birth or
  - the primary intended parent through a surrogacy arrangement
- 3.2 All PGRs registered at the University of Manchester and those in an approved submission pending period are eligible to take up to 52 weeks of Adoption Leave by interrupting their programme or extending their submission pending period, if they are the primary adopter.

3.3 A partner is eligible for leave on the same basis as the mother or main adopter if the mother or main adopter dies during or shortly before the period of Maternity or Adoption Leave.

## **Stipend Payments during Maternity / Adoption Leave**

3.4 PGRs receiving a maintenance stipend paid by the UKRI or the University of Manchester are entitled to:

- 26 weeks (6 monthly instalments) full stipend, followed by
- 13 weeks (3 monthly instalments) at reduced Statutory Maternity Pay rate, and
- 13 weeks (3 months) unpaid.

3.5 PGRs receiving an externally funded stipend directly from an external organisation or an external award administered through the University of Manchester must follow the regulations of the funder.

3.6 PGRs who are self-funded or in their submission pending period are not eligible for stipend payments during Maternity or Adoption Leave.

3.7 PGRs unsure about the source of their funding should contact their [Faculty Doctoral Academy](#).

## **Maternity Leave – Principles and Application**

3.8 The University permits PGRs to interrupt (or extend if in a submission pending period) their degree for the purpose of maternity leave at any time from the 11th week before the expected week of childbirth until the date of childbirth for a maximum period of 12 months in total for any period of leave.

3.9 Maternity leave must be taken in one consecutive block.

3.10 PGRs must discuss their forthcoming maternity leave with their supervisor(s) and the appropriate [Faculty Doctoral Academy](#) as early as possible and should confirm the start date of the maternity leave not later than the 15th week before the date on which the baby is due.

3.11 A PGR may choose when to start their maternity leave, subject to the following constraints

- Maternity leave cannot start before the 11th week before the expected week of childbirth.
- Maternity leave will be automatically triggered if a PGR is absent from their programme wholly or partly because of pregnancy after the beginning of the 4th week before the expected week of childbirth.
- The latest date a period of maternity leave can start is the date of childbirth.

3.12 Once the maternity leave dates have been agreed, PGRs should refer to the [PGR Interruptions to Programme Procedure](#) or the [Submission Pending Procedure](#) and must submit the relevant application form to the appropriate Faculty Doctoral Academy no later than the end of the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth. The PGR must also forward a copy of their MATB1 form as soon as it is provided by their GP.

3.13 Applications will be considered by either a School or Faculty postgraduate research degrees panel or equivalent.

3.14 The appropriate Faculty Doctoral Academy will then confirm in writing the terms of the maternity leave, maternity stipend payments (if applicable) and the latest date on which the PGR should return.

- 3.15 There is no limit to the number of times a PGR can interrupt for the purpose of maternity leave throughout the duration of the degree.
- 3.16 Maternity leave can be postponed or brought forward to a chosen start date by informing the supervisor(s) and the appropriate [Faculty Doctoral Academy](#) at least 28 days (or as soon as possible thereafter) before the leave is due to start.
- 3.17 Maternity leave will automatically be triggered should the PGR be absent wholly or partly because of pregnancy beyond the 36th week.

## **Adoption Leave – Principles and Application**

- 3.18 Adoption leave can be taken either from the date of child placement or no more than 14 days (including weekends and public holidays) prior to the date of child placement.
- 3.19 Adoption leave must be taken in one consecutive block.
- 3.20 PGRs should discuss their forthcoming adoption leave with their supervisor(s) and the appropriate Faculty Doctoral Academy as early as possible.
- 3.21 The PGR is responsible for submitting the relevant application form to the appropriate Faculty Doctoral Academy within seven days of being notified by the adoption agency that they have been matched with a child for adoption. The PGR must include the matching certificate (provided by the adoption agency)
- 3.22 Applications will be considered by either a School or Faculty postgraduate research degrees panel or equivalent.
- 3.23 The appropriate Faculty Doctoral Academy will then confirm in writing the terms of the adoption leave, adoption stipend payments (if applicable) and the latest date on which the PGR should return to study.
- 3.24 There is no limit to the number of times a PGR can interrupt for the purpose of adoption leave throughout the duration of the degree.

## **Return from Maternity / Adoption Leave**

- 3.25 PGRs are not permitted to return during the first two weeks from the date of childbirth (Maternity Leave only). This is classed as a period of compulsory maternity leave.
- 3.26 PGRs who wish to return to study earlier than agreed must advise their supervisor(s) and Faculty Doctoral Academy in writing, giving at least 8 weeks' notice of the intended date of return.
- 3.27 The Faculty Doctoral Academy will amend the duration of the interruption / extension period and thesis submission deadline.
- 3.28 PGRs who wish to return to study later than had previously been agreed must discuss this with their supervisor(s) and submit a further request for a period of interruption / extension (the maximum leave entitlement of 12 months).
- 3.29 A PGR who is not in submission pending and has been studying full-time but who indicates they wish to return to study on a part-time basis following maternity/adoption leave and have no visa restrictions can request a change to mode of attendance. For PGRs receiving funding managed by the University of

Manchester, change to part-time will lead to pro rata funding. The PGR is responsible for submitting the relevant application form to the appropriate [Faculty Doctoral Academy](#).

3.30 Faculty/Schools should consider what support needs a PGR returning from interruption after maternity/adoption leave may require and signpost the PGR to appropriate University of Manchester student support.

3.31 Further details about the return from a period of interruption can be found in the PGR Interruptions to Programme Procedure.

## **4. Partner's or Paternity Leave**

### **Eligibility**

4.1 All PGRs registered at the University of Manchester are eligible for to up to 14 days (including weekends and public holidays) of Partner's or Paternity Leave, if the following conditions are met:

- i. the leave is planned to commence (or does commence) before the end of the programme / studentship and the leave commences within 52 weeks of the birth of the child AND;
- ii. the PGR is either the father or non-birth parent of the child or partner of the child's birth-parent or intended co-parent through a surrogacy arrangement AND;
- iii. the PGR has or is expected to have the main responsibility (apart from any responsibility of the mother/birth parent) for the upbringing of the child.

### **General Principles / Applications**

4.2 Eligible PGRs have the option to take their partner's or paternity leave concurrently, or they can choose to split their leave into two non-consecutive periods of leave of one week each.

4.3 Where policies exist, sponsored PGRs must follow the Partner's or Paternity Leave policy of their sponsor.

4.4 A formal Partner's or Paternity Leave application is not usually necessary but PGRs must inform their supervisor(s) and the appropriate [Faculty Doctoral Academy](#) before taking Partner's or Paternity Leave.

### **Extensions to Programme for Partner's or Paternity Leave**

4.5 All PGRs who meet the eligibility criteria for Partner's or Paternity Leave are entitled to apply for a 14-day Extension to Programme or Extension to Submission Pending if required.

4.6 PGRs who wish to request a 14-day Extension on to their Programme on the grounds of partner's or paternity leave can do so by following the guidance in the [PGR Extension to Programme Procedure](#) or [PGR Submission Pending Policy](#).

4.7 Funding for an Extension to Programme for Partner's or Paternity Leave is dependent on the terms and conditions of the PGRs funder:

- UKRI Training Grant and University of Manchester Funding – 2 weeks stipend.
- External funding – payment provided at the discretion of the funder.
- Self-funding – no payment provided during partner's or paternity leave.

4.8 PGRs who are unsure about the source of their funding should contact their [Faculty Doctoral Academy](#).

## 5. Neonatal Care Leave

### Eligibility

5.1 All PGRs registered at the University of Manchester are eligible to apply for Neonatal Care Leave if:

- the birth of the child is within the registered period of the programme or a planned period of interruption for Maternity Leave and the child is receiving neonatal care in a hospital and;
- they are either the mother/birth parent of the child or a father/non birth parent or partner of the mother/birth parent;

### General Principles

5.2 Neonatal Care Leave is additional to any period of Maternity Leave or Partner's or Paternity Leave.

5.3 One week of Neonatal Care Leave can be provided for each week or part-week in which the child is in neonatal care (up to a maximum of 12 weeks) by way of an extension to the agreed interruption period for Maternity Leave (mother/birthparent) or by an Extension to Programme (father/non birth parent).

### Extensions to Maternity Leave for Neonatal Care Leave

5.4 The PGR mother/birthparent is entitled to an extended (up to 12 weeks) period of interruption for Maternity Leave if the baby requires neonatal care in hospital. Additional time may be added at the beginning or end of the original agreed Maternity Leave dates as required.

5.5 The PGR mother/birthparent should inform their supervisor(s) and [Faculty Doctoral Academy](#) as soon as possible, if an extension to the agreed Maternity Leave dates is required on the grounds of neonatal care. Evidence may be required. However, due to the nature of circumstances involved it is understood that there may be a delay informing the University and that an extension may need to be applied retrospectively.

5.6 Funding for an Extension to an agreed period of Maternity Leave is dependent on the terms and conditions of the PGRs funder:

- UKRI Training Grant and University of Manchester Funding – up to 12 weeks stipend at normal rate.
- External funding – payment provided at the discretion of the funder.

- Self-funding – no payment provided for neonatal care leave.

5.7 PGRs who are unsure about the source of their funding should contact their Faculty Doctoral Academy.

## **Extensions to Programme for Neonatal Care Leave**

5.8 All PGR fathers/non birth parents who meet the eligibility criteria for Neonatal Care Leave are entitled to apply for an Extension to Programme or submission pending period if required (up to 12 weeks) and should refer to the [PGR Extensions to Programme Procedure](#) or [PGR Submission Pending Policy](#).

5.9 Funding for an Extension to Programme for Neonatal Care Leave is dependent on the terms and conditions of the PGRs funder:

- UKRI Training Grant and University of Manchester Funding – up to 12 weeks stipend at normal rate.
- External funding – payment provided at the discretion of the funder.
- Self-funding – no payment provided for neonatal care leave.

5.10 PGRs who are unsure about the source of their funding should contact their Faculty Doctoral Academy.

## **6. Unpaid Parental Leave**

### **Eligibility**

6.1 All PGRs registered at the University of Manchester are entitled to a period of Unpaid Parental leave, up to 1 month each year subject to the following eligibility criteria:

- They must share responsibility for the child with their husband/wife/civil partner, or the child's other parent, or their partner (if they live with them); and
- They must be taking the leave to look after the child; and
- The terms and conditions of their studentship must not specifically exclude the taking of such leave.

### **Interruptions to Programme for Unpaid Parental Leave**

6.2 PGRs must discuss their request for Unpaid Parental Leave and agree the dates with their supervisor(s) and Faculty Doctoral Academy as early as possible.

6.3 Unpaid parental leave will require the PGR to interrupt their programme. PGRs should refer to the [PGR Interruptions to Programme Procedure](#) and submit an interruption application form to the appropriate Faculty Doctoral Academy.

6.4 Applications will be considered by either a School or Faculty postgraduate research degrees panel or equivalent.

6.5 The appropriate Faculty Doctoral Academy will then confirm in writing the terms of the unpaid parental leave and the date on which the PGR should return to study.

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