

# Doctoral College Parental Leave Bursary Guidance



## Introduction

- 1.1 This guidance covers Maternity, Paternity and Adoption leave for Newcastle PGR University Studentship Holders, who are in receipt of a funded stipend on or after 1<sup>st</sup> August 2021.
- 1.2 PGR University Studentship holders who have no other source of financial support during a period of Maternity, Paternity and Adoption leave may be eligible for a Doctoral College Parental Bursary.
- 1.3 PGR students who are self-funded, or in receipt of direct funding from external funders are not eligible for a Doctoral College Parental Leave Bursary.
- 1.4 A Doctoral College Parental Leave Bursary for Newcastle PGR University Studentship Holders is not a legal right. Entitlement to paid parental leave is instead determined by the terms and conditions of individual studentship awards and/or funder.
- 1.5 This guidance outlines the terms for the Doctoral College Parental Leave Bursary. This guidance, including the level of funding, may therefore be reviewed, and amended at the discretion of the Doctoral College, at any time. Any amendments must be approved by the Doctoral College Executive and Postgraduate Research Sub-Committee.

## Definitions and eligibility

- 1.6 This guidance applies to PGRs who are fully registered on an MPhil or Doctoral degree at Newcastle University.
- 1.6 This guidance applies to PGR University Studentship holders in receipt of a stipend directly from the University (i.e., central-or academic unit funded studentships) or via the University (i.e., from the University as part of a grant, award or contract funded by an external organisation). If in doubt, PGRs should consult their Academic Unit or Graduate School to confirm the source of their funding.
- 1.7 A PGR University Studentship holder will be eligible for a Doctoral College Parental Leave Bursary only where the date of birth or adoption falls within their funded period, as defined by the terms and conditions of their individual studentship. Where the end of the funded element of parental leave extends beyond the original end of the PGR's funded period, the funded period will be extended to the end of the funded element of the parental leave.

## Stipend

- 1.8 For the purposes of this guidance, a stipend refers to the maintenance element of a studentship, i.e., the element of the award which is intended to support the PGR's living costs. Therefore, PGRs in receipt of a fees-only award are not eligible for a Doctoral College Parental Leave Bursary under this guidance.

## Qualifying period

- 1.9 There is no qualifying period for Maternity, Paternity and Adoption leave.

## PGRs subject to UKVI restrictions

- 1.10 International PGR University Studentship holders subject to UKVI regulations must still comply with their visa regulations. The obligation to permit parental leave of up to 52 weeks for Maternity, Paternity and Adoption leave is subject to any restrictions on remaining in the UK, and payment of

funding imposed by virtue of the legislation and guidance relating to the granting of their Visa, as long as they continue to be sponsored by the University for visa purposes.

### **PGRs who carry out casual work for the University**

- 1.11** A PGR University Studentship holder who carries out casual work for the University (e.g., ad-hoc teaching and demonstrating duties) is not entitled to the University's paid parental leave but may be entitled to statutory pay (although current advice should be sought from People Services on this point). However, the PGR University Studentship holder, *may* be entitled to a Doctoral College Parental Leave Bursary, as follows:
- a. If the PGR University Studentship holder is within their funded period (see 1.7), they *are* eligible for Doctoral College Parental Leave Bursary under this guidance.
  - b. If the PGR University Studentship holder is no longer within their funded period (see 1.7), they *are not* eligible for Doctoral College Parental Leave Bursary under this guidance.

### **Payment terms**

- 1.12** The level of funded support available through the Doctoral College Parental Leave Bursary apply to an eligible PGR University Studentship Holder; it does not extend to their partner (where relevant) unless they too are eligible under this guidance.

### **Doctoral College Parental Leave**

- 1.13** PGR University Studentship holders are entitled to 52 weeks of parental leave if the expected week of childbirth will occur during the funded period of their award.

### **Maternity leave**

- 1.14** A PGR University Studentship Holder will be entitled to 39 weeks of funded support, as follows:
- The first **26 weeks** will be paid at the PGR University Studentship holders **usual full stipend rate**, pro-rated as necessary for part time students.
  - The following 13 weeks will be paid at a level commensurate with Statutory Maternity Pay.
- 1.15** Where a PGR University Studentship Holder has chosen to take the maximum period of parental leave (52 weeks) the final 13 weeks would not be funded.
- 1.16** The duration of the Doctoral College Parental Leave Bursary will be determined by the period of interruption the PGR University Studentship Holder has chosen to take, up to the maximum stated in 1.13.
- 1.17** The earliest leave can commence is 11 weeks before the expected week of childbirth.

### **Paternity leave**

- 1.18** A PGR University Studentship holder who is the spouse or partner of the mother or adopter is:
- Entitled to up to **2 weeks** paid Ordinary Paternity Leave at **full stipend rate**, which cannot start before the birth and must end within 56 days of the birth.
  - Also entitled to an extended period of unpaid parental leave, up to a maximum of 50 weeks, with their studentship extended accordingly.
  - Unpaid parental leave must be completed within 12 months of the birth of the child. This leave may be taken in up to three blocks of leave or all at once.

### **Adoption leave**

- 1.19** A PGR University Studentship holder is entitled to paid parental leave where they adopt. In such cases, the PGR University Studentship holder must be identified as either the 'lead' adopter (and thus entitled to paid parental leave equivalent to that outlined above under 'maternity leave') or the 'support' adopter (and thus entitled to paid parental leave equivalent to that outlined above under 'paternity leave'). In either case, the PGR University Studentship holders' partner (where relevant),

regardless of their student or employment status, must not be claiming the same rights as the PGR University Studentship holder (i.e. a PGR Studentship Holder and their partner cannot both be claiming the equivalent of the paid parental leave outlined above under 'maternity leave' simultaneously); PGR University Studentship holders may be required to provide evidence that this is not the case.

### **Extension of parental leave**

**1.20** A PGR University Studentship holder who chooses initially not take the full parental leave entitlement, may apply later to extend their period of parental leave. In order to extend a period of parental leave, a PGR University Studentship holder must submit an interruption request, as per the process outlined below.

### **Repayment of funds**

**1.21** A PGR University Studentship holder who has received a Doctoral College Parental Leave Bursary will be expected to return to their research degree studies. Where a student does not return to studies, the Doctoral College would normally require repayment of the Doctoral College Parental Leave Bursary.

**1.22** A PGR University Studentship holder who has returned to their research degree studies following receipt of a Doctoral College Parental Leave Bursary may be required to repay funds if they withdraw from their studies within one month of returning from parental leave.

**1.23** Where a PGR University Studentship holder in receipt of a Doctoral College Parental Leave Bursary returns to their research degree studies earlier than indicated, they will normally be required to pay any funds paid to them in advance. Any repayment will be calculated from the date of return to studies.

### **Responsibilities**

#### **PGR University Studentship Holder responsibilities**

**1.24** Submit a request for an interruption of studies through completion of a mitigations form on the PGR CoP System, indicating Maternity, Paternity and Adoption as the reason for the interruption.

**1.25** A PGR University Studentship Holder in receipt of a Doctoral College Parental Leave Bursary will be responsible for advising the Graduate School and Doctoral College of any changes in their circumstances during the period of the bursary, so that guidance can be provided about the potential impact on funding.

#### **Graduate School responsibilities**

**1.26** Advise the Doctoral College of any interruptions of study approved for Maternity, Paternity and Adoption leave.

**1.27** Notify the Doctoral College if they become aware of any changes in the PGR University Studentship Holder circumstances during the period of the parental leave bursary.

#### **Doctoral College responsibilities**

**1.28** Check the source of funding to determine whether they are a PGR University Studentship Holder who is eligible for a Doctoral College Parental Leave Bursary.

**1.29** For eligible PGR University Studentship Holder's, provide email confirmation to the PGR University Studentship Holders of their entitlement to the Doctoral College Parental Leave Bursary.

**1.30** Liaise with Student Payments to set up and arrange payment of the Doctoral College Parental Leave Bursary.