

Students receiving stipend from NERC and whose pregnancy due date falls within their funding (i.e. period covered by a stipend) can benefit from 2 maternity leave policies according to their situation:

- NERC/UKRI as detailed in the [UKRI Grant Terms and Conditions](#) TGC8.1
- University of Edinburgh as detailed in the [UoE Maternity Policy](#) if they are member of staff or eligible through their Tutor and Demonstrator (T&D) contract

### ENTITLEMENT

#### NERC/UKRI MATERNITY POLICY AND PAY

Through their NERC DTP studentship, students going on Maternity Leave are entitled to:

- 1. 1st period of paid leave on current full stipend: 30 weeks (7 months)**  
26 weeks of Maternity Leave as recommended by UKRI, to which the DTP adds 4 weeks of accrued holiday;
- 2. 2nd period of paid leave at SMP rate: 13 weeks (3 months)**  
SMP rate is currently £156.66/week (2022) – *Please note this is not 'official' SMP, it is just the rate that NERC recommends us to pay.*
- 3. 3rd period of unpaid leave: 13 weeks (3 months)**

There is no qualifying period for maternity leave. This means that as long as the due date falls within the period of their award (period covered by a stipend) then the student is entitled to the above, no matter how long the student has been on his PhD.

There is no limit to the number of periods of Maternity that can be taken during a studentship.

#### THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH MATERNITY POLICY

If students are a member of staff or if they have a Tutoring and Demonstrating contract, they might be entitled to further maternity pay through the **UEMP (University of Edinburgh Maternity Pay)**.

College HR will be able to advise if you are entitled to some extra maternity pay through the UEMP scheme (it depends on the number of hours you will have worked). If you are eligible, the UEMP pay will be added to the full stipend above, paid during the first 26 weeks. There would be 2 options you need to choose from to receive that money (detailed in the attached policy) and this will be detailed within the letter College HR will send you in due course.

#### GOVERNMENT MATERNITY PAY SCHEMES

- ✓ **SMP (Statutory Maternity Pay)**  
Eligible employees (depending on the length and volume of hours of your teaching contract) can get SMP for up to 39 weeks through their employer. However, in this

instance, the SMP will be covered by the DTP (included in your full pay for the 1st period and then SMP rate pay covering the following 3 months of the second period).

✓ **Maternity Allowance**

Maternity Allowance is usually paid if you do not qualify for SMP. However, in this instance, you will get SMP through the DTP in addition to a first period of leave on full pay, so the Maternity Allowance is not applicable.

## WHAT TO DO NEXT

1. **Declare your maternity leave on P&M via your staff account if you have an employment contract with the university (T&D).** This will trigger the assessment of your entitlement to UEMP/SMP via your employee contract.
2. **Fill in an interruption request form (available [online](#)) and return it to your PGR Office with supporting evidence (MATB1 form) at least 3 weeks before you start your maternity leave** to cover at least the first period of maternity leave (7 months on full stipend). Your stipend will continue as normal for the first period on full pay.
3. **At least a month before this first period ends, get back in touch with the PGR Office stating if you would like to take the 2<sup>nd</sup> period** (3 months paid at SMP rate) so the necessary can be done regarding your stipend payments (and submit another interruption request for another 3 months). And the same before the later 3-month unpaid period.

If you know straight away how long you want to be off then let the PGR Office know so that the full interruption can be processed at once and everything can be settled before you go on leave.

## FURTHER IMPORTANT NOTES

- ✓ Please note that, as it is not possible to process multiple and distinct interruptions related to a single maternity leave, you will have to take your leave **in one block**. Therefore, you won't be able to split the first paid period (7 months) nor to come back after this and take the second paid and/or 3<sup>rd</sup> unpaid period at a later date. Should you wish to take your second paid leave and unpaid leave, you will have to add them immediately after the 1<sup>st</sup> paid leave period.
- ✓ **Return to study:** you will be able to return to your study part-time, providing it is not less than 50% FTE (and that your supervisor agrees as it may affect your PhD project). Please note that, normally, no change of mode of study will be allowed during the 4th year (writing-up period). If ever you decide not to come back to your PhD (withdrawing), be aware that we will have to recover the value of the maternity funding from you.
- ✓ Please keep your supervisor and PGR Office informed of your decisions and plans at every stage.

## OTHER HELP AND SUPPORT

- ✓ **Health and Safety:** the Health and Safety Department has a [Pregnancy webpage](#) which provides information on risks specific to new and expectant mothers. Please have a look at it and make sure you take all necessary measures and caution whenever you feel necessary. Let your PGR

Office and/or your School Head of Health and Safety know if you have any concern about your safety at work due to your pregnancy.

- ✓ **Maternity Leave toolkit:** the University provides a handy [Maternity Leave toolkit](#) where you can find more information and tips to manage your maternity leave and return to work as best as possible.
- ✓ **Unpaid Parental Leave:** UKRI-funded students are entitled to up to 50 weeks of Unpaid Parental Leave (see [UKRI Grant Terms and Conditions](#) TGC 8.1). 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.
- ✓ **Shared Parental Leave:** The University of Edinburgh has a [Shared Parental Leave Policy](#) from which E3/E4 DTP students can benefit if they qualify (if they are member of staff or eligible through their Tutor and Demonstrator (T&D) contract). The Shared Parental Leave policy gives further details on the scheme and how it works. Please get in touch with your School HR Office and the DTP manager if you are interested in this scheme.
- ✓ **Keeping in Touch days (KiT)** can be provided for students, e.g. to participate in activities related to their research project during their leave. Such instances should be agreed in advance by the student and their supervisor and not add up to more than 10 days across the leave period. Payment for KiT days can be made at the students basic daily rate (regardless of the actual hours worked) only during the unpaid leave period of the maternity leave (or period “3”, see above). Please make sure that the number of KiT days are signaled to the DTP manager via email so that payment can be arranged.