

Policy on annual leave and maternity, paternity and adoption arrangements

Annual leave

All PGR students are entitled to a maximum of eight weeks annual leave including public holidays and University closure days. Students should notify their supervisors in writing of when they intend to take their annual leave. Those students holding Tier 4 visas sponsored by the University may take annual leave without risk to their immigration status. While on annual leave, students and supervisors should continue to make contact every month.

Maternity leave

All PGR students are entitled to one full year (52 weeks) of maternity leave. Those students in receipt of an RCUK stipend or a Sussex Scholarship are entitled to 26 weeks of maternity leave on full stipend and a further 26 weeks of unpaid maternity leave. Students may decide when they wish their maternity leave to begin, but should inform the Research Student Administration Office of their intentions no later than two months before the start date.

Adoption leave

Adoption leave is granted on the same basis as maternity leave.

Paternity leave

Fathers are entitled to up to 10 days (two weeks) ordinary paternity leave and up to 26 weeks of additional paternity leave. For those students in receipt of an RCUK stipend or a Sussex Scholarship, the ordinary paternity leave will be at full stipend and the period of additional paternity leave may include paid and unpaid leave, depending on the individual circumstances, and any paid leave should be at full stipend. Students may decide when they wish their paternity leave to begin, but should inform the Research Student Administration Office of their intentions no later than two months before the start date.

Authorised absence for students holding Tier 4 visas

International PGR students holding a Tier 4 visa are entitled to a period of authorised absence from their studies, during which the University will continue to act as their sponsor. Advice from the UKVI is that this period does not exceed three months (90 days). Periods of authorised absence of up to three months will be granted for maternity, paternity or adoption leave, and exceptionally for medical or financial reasons. If a student holding a Tier 4 visa wishes to take longer than three months authorised absence, the University will cease to be their sponsor. The student must then return to their home country and apply for a new CAS (Confirmation of Acceptance to Study) and a new visa when they are ready to resume their studies. During the period of authorised absence it will be the responsibility of the supervisor to make regular contact with the student. Students may decide when they wish their period of authorised absence to begin, but should inform the Research Student Administration Office of their intentions no later than two months before the start date.

General points

- There is no qualifying period for maternity, paternity or adoption leave, so a student may take leave regardless of when they commenced their studies.
- Submission dates will be amended for periods of maternity, paternity or adoption leave and if the student changes to part-time study following their period of parental leave.
- There is no limit to the number of periods of maternity, ordinary paternity, additional paternity or adoption leave that can be taken during the course of a doctoral degree.