

LONG-TERM LEAVE POLICY FOR RESEARCHERS

1. Purpose

This policy sets out our position on parental (ie shared parental, maternity, paternity or adoption leave), sick or other long-term leave for researchers funded by us.

2. Scope

This policy covers the leave entitlements and the support we can provide a researcher funded by us who needs to take a period of parental, sick or other long-term leave.

3. Key points

3.1. Leave entitlements for researchers

Researchers funded by us are entitled to take the full period of parental and other long-term leave in accordance with their host institution's standard employment policies and procedures on the issue.

In accordance with our Grant Conditions, paid leave entitlements for staff will be borne as follows:

3.1.1. Paid leave costs for staff at our core-funded institutes

Where one of our grants that funds the individual's salary or stipend is an institute core grant, the grant may be used to fund the individual's paid leave entitlements.

3.1.2. Paid sick leave entitlements for staff whose salaries are grant-funded

Paid sick leave entitlements may be charged to our grants in accordance with the host institution's usual policy. Where an individual's salary is part-funded by the grant, paid sick leave entitlements may be charged to the grant on a pro-rata basis.

3.1.3 Unpaid carer's leave

Staff employed through our grants are entitled to take five days of unpaid carer's leave a year as their statutory right. Host organisations are responsible for accommodating requests in line with their usual HR procedures.

3.1.4. Support for our grant holders and research staff

Where a grant holder or researcher funded by us takes parental, sick or other long-term leave, we will, where appropriate, extend the official end date of the grant through a no cost extension for the period equivalent to the period of leave taken.

3.2. Leave entitlements for students

3.2.1. Paid leave costs for non-clinical PhDs and MB PhD students.

Where the following applies, the grant must be used to fund paid leave entitlements in accordance with the following:

- The grant funds a doctoral studentship;
- The student is not an employee of the host institution and not otherwise entitled to paid parental leave or paid long-term sick leave under the host institution's policies,
- The student takes sick leave or parental leave in the course of completing a doctorate funded by us and while in receipt of a stipend funded by us

For non-clinical students and MB-PhD students we will bear the following costs:

- a. A non-clinical student's parental, sick or long-term leave at our stipend rate for a fixed duration according to the type of leave taken.
- b. A MB-PhD student's parental, sick or long-term leave whilst the student is undertaking the 3-year PhD training and during which we are paying their stipend. The leave entitlement is at our stipend rate for a fixed duration

according to the type of leave taken.

For the avoidance of doubt, this provision applies to non-clinical PhD students and MB PhD students while they are completing their doctorate and in receipt of a stipend funded by us. We will not fund paid leave during the course of a student's undergraduate medical studies.

Leave type	Paid leave entitlement
Sick leave	4 months at full stipend then 4 months at half stipend p.a.
Maternity/adoption leave	26 weeks at full stipend, then 13 weeks at statutory rate, then 13 weeks unpaid
Paternity or partner leave	2 weeks at full stipend
Shared parental leave	We will match the entitlement for paid maternity/adoption leave (less 2 weeks mandatory maternity/adoption leave), adjusted according to the duration of leave and payments received by the other parent.
Neonatal care leave	1 week of neonatal care leave for each week or part-week in which your baby is receiving neonatal care, up to a maximum of 12 weeks. This is additional to maternity or paternity leave, and a stipend can be drawn at the full stipend rate.
Parental bereavement leave	5 days leave at full stipend
Bereavement leave	5 days leave at full stipend
Disability leave	Consideration will be given to requests for abeyance relating to reasonable adjustments, subject to our approval
Carer's leave	5 days unpaid leave

- i. There is no qualifying period for taking long-term leave.
- ii. Students are entitled to paid parental, sick or long-term leave provided that they return to work for a period of time as agreed with their supervisor.
- iii. Students must also follow their host institution's notification requirements.
- iv. The host institution must keep accurate records and certificates (e.g. maternity certificate, MATBI form, sick notes) of leave entitlement as it would for employees.
- v. In the first instance, we expect the cost of the paid leave to be borne as follows:
 - For students on our response-mode funded grants - through any underspend on the studentship grant or its parent grant (e.g. the programme or fellowship grant).
 - For students funded at our centres and institutes or on a clinical academic training programme - through any available funds (underspend) on the award or core funding through which the studentship is supported.
- vi. As the cost of the paid leave should be borne through underspend where possible, the cost should be charged to the relevant grant, training account or clinical academic training programme in the first instance. Our expectation is that institutions will be able to find funds to cover these costs either from the grant, training account or clinical academic training programme. If, at final reconciliation, that is not the case, for students funded at our centres and institutes or as part of a clinical academic training programme, institutions should discuss with us about using any funding underspend.

3.2.2. No cost extensions for student leave

Where a student funded by us takes parental, sick or other long-term leave, we will, where appropriate, extend the official end date of the grant through a no cost extension for the period equivalent to the period of leave taken. Any requests to change the structure or period of the grant must be made in writing by the host institution and approved by us in advance of the period of leave commencing.

3.2.3. Completion of studentships beyond the parent grant end date

Where a student funded by us on a programme or fellowship grant (the parent grant) takes parental, sick or other long-term leave but a no cost extension to the parent grant is not required, the studentship may need to be completed after the end date of the parent grant. In such cases, the host institution must ensure the student has appropriate support and supervision to complete the studentship.

3.3. Use of grant funds for paid leave

Except as set out above, the host institution may not use the salary allocation for that individual (or any other part of the grant) to fund the individual's paid leave entitlements and may only use it to pay for cover for the vacant position.

The host institution must ensure that the individual receives paid parental or other long-term leave entitlements in accordance with its policies for all employees (including without limitation clinical research training fellows). It must also bear the costs of those paid leave entitlements regardless of the fact that the employee's salary is paid from the grant.

3.4. Support for our fellowship grantholders

Where the grantholder is one of our fellows, we may also consider the following requests:

3.4.1. We may suspend the fellowship grant during the period of leave

During this suspension period, no payments will be made to the host institution with respect to that grant. The official end date of the grant may be extended through a no cost extension for the period equivalent to the period of leave taken.

3.4.2. Fellowship grant costed extensions

We may provide a costed grant extension for the Fellowship up to the period equivalent to the period of leave taken, where the research activities of the Fellowship have continued during the Fellow's period of leave.

In these circumstances, any remaining underspend should be used in the first instance to fund cost extensions; however, additional cost requests will be considered if the underspend is not sufficient. Requests for costed extensions should be made to us as early as possible before the end date and within six

months of the originally scheduled end date. Any additional costs requested must be direct research costs only (eg research related consumables and direct research salaries as per our [Costs Guidance](#)).

Requests for such cost extensions will be considered on a case-by-case basis and the grantholder must provide assurance that there will be adequate supervision for research staff during this period.

3.5. Occupational benefits as a result of continuous service of employment for our clinical fellows and clinical research training fellows

We are a signatory to '[UK clinical academic training in medicine and dentistry: principles and obligations](#)'. In the event of one of our clinical fellows or clinical research training fellows having changed employers to become a new employee of the host institution as a result of taking up a grant in order to pursue their career pathway, certain occupational benefits, which have accrued as a result of continuous service of employment must be recognised and protected by the host institution.

This includes any changes in employer from a NHS trust/board to an academic institution or vice versa. In principle, there should be no detriment to moving in either direction. These include as a minimum all family and care-related leave and pay (not limited to gender or sexual orientation) and sick leave and pay (irrespective of disability status or health history).

3.6. Part-time or flexible working following parental leave

We will also consider supporting the continuation of a grant on a part-time, flexible working basis to allow researchers to combine caring responsibilities or any other reason and their academic research.

We will always consider requests as long as they fit in with the needs of the employing host institution. As a general rule, where the grantholder is one of our fellows and we pay their salary, we expect at least 0.5 FTE or 80% of the fellow's working hours, whichever is greater, to be spent on academic research by the fellow.

3.7. Submission of requests

Any of the above requests to change the structure or period of the grant must be made in writing by the host institution and approved by us in advance of the period of leave commencing.

3.8. Suitability requirements for our support

We will take into consideration time spent outside of research such as parental, sick or other long-term leave when reviewing the suitability of applicants. Applicants should clearly detail and explain periods of leave from research or part-time working in their application.

Details of periods of leave or part-time working will be used by our expert review panels and committees to make appropriate adjustments when assessing an applicant's record of outputs, research achievements and career progression.

4. Support and Advice

For any queries about this policy please contact:

- policies@cancer.org.uk
- students@cancer.org.uk

5. Related documents

For more information, please see the following documents/web pages:

- Grant Conditions: <http://www.cancerresearchuk.org/funding-for-researchers/applying-for-funding/conditions-of-your-grant>
- Costs Guidance: <http://www.cancerresearchuk.org/funding-for-researchers/applying-for-funding/policies-that-affect-your-grant>
- [UK clinical academic training in medicine and dentistry: principles and obligations](#)
- [Unpaid carer's leave - GOV.UK](#)

Policy sponsor	Dr Iain Foulkes, Executive Director, Research & Innovation
Policy owner	Dan Burkwood, Director of Research Operations & Communications
Subject Matter Experts (SME)	Research Governance & Finance Team
Executive Board or Council approval required?	N – approved by Grants Management Policy Board
Date of last review	November 2025
Next review due	November 2027
Superseded documents	Version 5

Summary of Changes

Version	Date	Author	Approved by	Summary of Changes
V4	Sept 2021	Sue Russell	GMPB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formatting into new policy template with section numbering changes • Updates to section 3.1 to clarify: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - how different paid leave entitlements should be covered to bring this in line with CRUK's Grant Conditions - CRUK will not fund paid leave during the course of a student's undergraduate medical studies.
V5	Oct 2023	Mat Tata	GMPB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formatting into new template following the new CRUK branding.
V6	Dec 2025	Katie Gargett	GMPB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates to PhD leave section, now including neonatal leave,

				<p>bereavement leave, disability leave and carer's leave.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Addition of Unpaid carer's leave to policy.• Applying new policy template updates to formatting• Reordering flow of policy to improve readability
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