

St John's College Framework on parental leave

1. Aim

The aim of this framework is to support pregnant students and students on maternity, paternity or adoption leave and to ensure their fair and consistent treatment.

2. Scope

The College's framework is intended to be read in conjunction with the University policy on Student Maternity, Paternity and Adoption Leave can be found on the Student Gateway http://www.ox.ac.uk/sites/files/oxford/field/field_document/Student%20Maternity%2C%20Paternity%20and%20Adoption%20Leave%20Policy.pdf.

3. Application for maternity leave

a. Undergraduate students

Students who give birth may choose to suspend their studies, normally for no less than one year, before recommencing their studies. Where possible, the leave period should be timed to take account of the academic requirements of the course and should commence at the end rather than part way through a term.

Applications for maternity leave will be dealt with under the College Policy on Intermission (in the College handbook). Applications must be supported by a MATB1 form available from a midwife.

Students should notify their Tutor and the College Office of their pregnancy no later than the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth. Earlier notification may be necessary in some cases, for example where a student works in a potentially hazardous environment.

b. Postgraduate Taught Students

Students on postgraduate taught courses who give birth may choose to suspend their studies, normally for no less than one year, before recommencing their studies. Where possible, the leave period should be timed to take account of the academic requirements of the course and should commence at the end rather than part way through a term.

Students should notify the College Office as well as their academic department of their pregnancy no later than the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth. Earlier notification may be necessary in some cases, for example where a student works in a potentially hazardous environment.

Postgraduate taught students should submit a University application for suspension of status. A variant of form GSO 17 (Application for suspension of status) is available for this purpose. Applications must be supported by a MATB1 form available from a midwife. Within College, this will be considered on behalf of the relevant College Officer, usually the Academic Dean.

c. Postgraduate Research Students

Students who give birth during their period of registration for a postgraduate research degree are automatically entitled to suspend their studies for up to 3 terms of maternity leave. The timing of maternity leave will depend on a number of factors, including term dates and the nature of the student's research work. Such leave is calculated separately from the 6 terms of ordinary suspension of study that may be permitted.

Students should notify the College Office as well as their supervisor and academic department of their pregnancy no later than the 15th week before the expected week of

childbirth. Earlier notification may be necessary in some cases, for example where a student works in a potentially hazardous environment.

Postgraduate research students should submit a University application for suspension of status. Within College, this will be considered by the relevant College Officer, usually the Academic Dean. Applications must be supported by a MATB1 form available from a midwife. A variant of form GSO 17 (Application for suspension of status) is available for this purpose.

4. Paternity leave

a. Undergraduate and postgraduate taught students

Partners are permitted to take 2 weeks leave either at the time or within 3 months of the birth. Where possible, the leave period should be timed to take account of the academic requirements of the course. This will not entail dispensation to miss examinations. Partners are also eligible to apply for a longer period of suspension, in line with the arrangements made for maternity leave. This will normally last one full year so that the student may recommence studying at the point at which they suspended.

b. Postgraduate research students

Partners are permitted to take 2 weeks leave either at the time or within 3 months of the birth. This leave is not taken as suspension of study. Where possible, the leave period should be timed to take account of the academic requirements of the student's research.

Applications for suspension for an extended period of paternity or shared parental leave of up to 3 terms will be considered, with account being taken, where appropriate, of the sponsoring or funding body's policy. Where the College is the sole funder, advice should be sought at the earliest stage from the Academic Dean.

5. Adoption leave

The College aims to ensure that its arrangements for adoption leave parallel those for maternity and paternity leave.

6. Same sex couples

In cases which do not fall under the arrangements for adoption leave, the woman who gives birth to the child will be eligible to take maternity leave which her partner will be eligible to take paternity leave.

7. Overseas students

Under the terms of the student visa, overseas students who interrupt their studies will need to obtain an extension to their visa, and may be required to return to their home country while suspended from study. Students should seek advice on visas and immigration at the earliest stage from the College Office or from student.immigration@admin.ox.ac.uk.

8. Access to facilities while on parental leave

Undergraduate and postgraduate students on parental leave will retain their University cards and access to University email accounts, the University's electronic resources, and University libraries.

Students on parental leave are not expected to be studying and therefore are not entitled to access to the academic facilities of the College. Students on parental leave may, however, continue to have access to the College as a social space and will retain the ability to book meals in hall.

New mothers may not attend the College for work purposes for two weeks after giving birth.

The MCR and JCR may offer associate membership of their common rooms to students on parental leave for the period of their suspension.

9. Planning for return to study

Undergraduate and postgraduate students on parental leave are encouraged to maintain occasional contact with their tutor or their supervisor so that arrangements may be made for their return to study.

Prior to a student's planned return to study from an extended period of parental leave, arrangements will be made via the College Office for timely discussion of arrangements to support a student's successful return to College and study. This may include provision of advice on adjustments to mode of study.

10. Financial support

Postgraduate students in receipt of a scholarship intending to take a period of parental leave should seek early advice from their funding body as to the provision of funded leave. In general, the College will seek to align its scholarship arrangements with those agreed with the University departments and external funding bodies. Postgraduate students who are fully funded by the College may apply to the College for up to six months paid maternity leave and up to six months suspension of award. Application may be made to the College for funding of shared parental leave. Paid and unpaid leave periods should be taken consecutively.

On-course students who are experiencing unforeseen financial hardship are encouraged to speak in the first instance to the Senior Dean regarding an application to the College Hardship Fund.

Home/EU students should ensure that they have applied for all of the government funding for which they may be entitled. This may include child benefit and Parent's Learning Allowance <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/fees-funding/assistance/hardship>

Students may also apply to centrally administered hardship funds:

- [Access to Learning Fund \(ALF\)](#) for students from the UK
- [University Hardship Fund \(UHF\)](#) for students experiencing unexpected financial difficulties
- [Vice-Chancellors' Fund](#) for students in the final stages of their DPhil.

11. Accommodation

Pregnant students living in single College accommodation are advised to contact the Domestic Office to arrange for a risk assessment of the accommodation to be carried out, and if necessary, may have to move to more appropriate single accommodation.

It is not possible for a child to be accommodated in single accommodation.

Students are advised to contact the Domestic Office at the earliest opportunity regarding the potential availability of family accommodation. It should be noted that students who have suspended their status are not usually expected to be resident in College.

12. Childcare

The Bainton Road nursery is a purpose-built facility that caters for children from 6 months to pre-school age <https://www.sjc.ox.ac.uk/college-life/bainton-road-nursery/>. It gives priority to the children of students and employees of St John's. Students interested in requesting a place for their child(ren) in the Bainton Road Nursery should contact the Nursery manager, Marie Gaughan.

Information about the University's childcare services, including including nurseries, play-schemes and help with the cost of childcare, is available from the Childcare Services website: <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/childcare/> .

13. Sources of further advice

Students are encouraged to seek informal discussion and advice from their tutors/college advisers, the Academic Administrator, the Graduate Officer, members of the College welfare team, or the Academic Dean.

University information for student parents can be found here:

<https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/childcare?wssl=1>

OUSU offers a range of support for student parents, outlined in it Student Parent Handbook http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/media/global/wwwadminoxacuk/localsites/childcare/documents/Student_Parent_Handbook_facebook.pdf

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