

Faculty of Natural and Environmental Sciences

Support for Academic and Research Staff During Family Leave

Parents at the University of Southampton are entitled to take maternity, paternity, adoption or parental leave, but extended periods of leave for new parents can disrupt careers and on-going research projects.

Academic and research staff who take extended periods of family leave can find that their contribution to large research projects stalls or stops and this can be damaging to their careers. It can also be difficult to kick-start their research when they return from extended leave. Academic staff who employ staff on fixed-term contracts or grants who then take extended leave can experience considerable disruption to their projects. This can sometimes deter fixed-term staff from taking their full entitlement to leave. It can also lead to subconscious gender bias when recruiting staff for research projects.

Some funding bodies (such as RCUK) do provide funds to cover costs associated with family leave. However, when such funding is not available, the Faculty of Natural and Environmental Sciences will provide funding of up to £10k to ensure support for academic and research staff throughout periods of extended leave and to minimise the impact of extended leave on academic and research activities. Funding is available for the following purposes:

- to hire (including via a PhD) an individual to continue laboratory work on specific research projects if no suitable technical resource can be deployed from elsewhere;
- to facilitate continuity of research activity, including an element for child care costs to cover time at conferences, on cruises and in the field;
- to provide funds to cover time lost by researchers on fixed-term contracts that are not covered by the funding body to ensure that projects are completed.

Eligibility

To be eligible to apply for funding under this scheme, staff must fulfil the following criteria:

- be an existing member of academic or research staff;
- have completed one year's service;
- be taking family leave for a minimum of 6 months;
- if on a fixed-term contract, have 6 months remaining on their contract following their return from family leave.

Application Process

- Applications for support from the scheme should be made by academic staff and independent research fellows. If an application is made to cover leave for a researcher on a fixed-term contract, the application should be made by the Principle Investigator
- Applications should be made in advance of the support being required, preferably at least 3 months.
- The attached form should be completed and forwarded to the Head of Academic Unit who will consult with the Dean and Associate Deans, who will make final decision.
- The decision will be made within one month of the application.

Faculty of Natural and Environmental Sciences

Application for funding to support staff taking leave for family purposes

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

Employee full name:	
Employee number:	
Post title:	
Academic Unit:	
Current Level & spinal point:	
Line Manger:	
Has alternative sources of funding (e.g. from funding body) been investigated?	

2. REASON FOR APPLICATION

Please write a short proposal (less than one side of A4) outlining the resource needs and costs up to a ceiling of £10K.

--

3. APPROVAL PROCESS

Head of Academic Unit:	
Date:	
Comments:	

Dean/Associate Dean:	
Date:	
Comments:	

Head of Faculty Finance:	
Date:	
Comments:	