

Research Degree Student Leave Policy

This policy sets out the College's position with respect to research degree (PhD, MPhil, MD[Res] and EngD) annual leave and provides operational guidance to students, supervisors and academic Departments. This policy **does not** apply to research degree students who are employed by the College. These students are subject to the staff terms and conditions for annual leave entitlement.

The College's [Mutual Expectations for Research Degree Student-Supervisor Partnerships](#) makes specific reference to the importance of maintaining a healthy work- life balance and good wellbeing. It also reminds students and supervisors that taking regular breaks and annual leave is to be encouraged and supported.

Institutions are required by funders to have a clear policy on student annual leave entitlement and to ensure that this is communicated to students at the start of their studentship.

Annual leave entitlement

All funded students are advised to check the terms and conditions of their studentship which will set out their annual leave entitlement.

Unless otherwise stated in these terms and conditions, the College's position is that all research degree students, including international students with a Student Visa, are entitled to a minimum of 30 days to a maximum of 40 days per year (including public holidays and College closure days) of annual leave (pro rata for part-time students). [This annual leave entitlement aligns with the UKRI's terms and conditions for training grants, student annual leave](#) (section 8.3).

Supervisors and students should discuss and agree the leave entitlement at the start of each academic session. The student annual leave year commences on the first day of student registration and ends a year later. The expectation is that students will take their full annual leave allowance during the current leave year. In the eventuality this is not the case, up to five days of untaken leave may be carried over into the next leave year. Carried over leave which is not used in the new leave year will expire at the end of the leave year. Any leave not taken at the end of the studentship will expire and will not be paid.

Booking annual leave

Students undertaking work in collaboration with non-academic partners are expected to consider their obligations to those partners when planning their leave. When submitting a request for annual leave, students should consider the timing and how it fits with their project timeline and PhD milestones. For example, it would not be considered good practice, and requests may be declined, if students ask to take their entire leave allowance in one single period. By way of reminder, international students on a Student Visa are not permitted to be away from College for more than 60 days in any single period.

Requests for annual leave (which can be taken as full days and half days) should be discussed between students and their supervisors. It is expected that students provide reasonable notice. In exceptional circumstances, requests for annual leave may be declined or postponed.

Transparent recording and tracking of student annual leave is important. Where departments do not have a local system in place for the management of student leave, it is recommended that supervisors and their students mutually agree how student annual leave is requested, how it will be monitored and how carry-over leave will be implemented.

Sickness during annual leave

If students fall ill during a period of annual leave, they will be able to reclaim days lost through illness, provided they can supply evidence of their illness. There is no entitlement to time off in lieu for any public holidays which fall during periods of sickness absence.

Annual Leave whilst on Parental Leave (Maternity, Paternity, Shared Parental and Adoptive)

Students are entitled to receive both holiday and mandatory leave (bank holiday and College closure days), during their parental leave period. However, students are encouraged to consider using a proportion of their annual leave entitlement before the start and after the end of their parental leave.

Any mandatory leave days which fall during the parental leave period should be added to and taken as holiday leave. Mandatory leave days which fall before or after their parental leave period should be taken as normal.

If the period of parental leave crosses two annual leave years, students may carry over annual leave accrued in the first leave year but must use these days within three months following their return. Any annual leave accrued in the second leave year may be taken as normal.

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