

## **FAQs**

### ***Q: Who is eligible to receive support under this policy?***

A: The policy applies to PGR students who are in receipt of a University-funded studentship which includes stipend support. Full details on eligibility, including studentship funding sources within the scope of the policy, are detailed within the policy document.

### ***Q: My studentship includes third party funding – am I eligible under this policy?***

A: Students in receipt of University-funded PGR studentships which are funded (fully or partially) through external studentship income which is allocated and administered by the University (e.g. studentships funded through industry or research grant income) are eligible under this policy. Where the funder has a specific sickness absence funding policy, this will take precedence.

### ***Q: I am in receipt of a University-funded scholarship which covers my tuition fees only – am I eligible under this policy?***

A: No, students in receipt of fees-only awards are not eligible under this policy.

### ***Q: When does the policy come into effect?***

A: The policy is effective from the start of the 2021/22 academic year (01/08/2021).

### ***Q: I have already started/completed a period of interruption on medical grounds after 01/08/2021 – am I eligible to receive support?***

A: If you have already started/completed a period of interruption on medical grounds during 2021/22, you may be eligible to now claim sickness absence stipend payments under this policy in respect of any period of medical interruption falling after 01/08/2021– please contact us for advice.

### ***Q: I started a period of interruption on medical grounds before 01/08/2021 and my interruption ends/ended after 01/08/2021 – am I eligible to receive support?***

A: If your period of interruption started prior to 01/08/2021 but ends/ended after 01/08/2021, you may be eligible for sickness absence stipend payments for the period of absence falling after 01/08/21. Please contact us for advice on your particular circumstances.

### ***Q: I completed a period of interruption of study on medical grounds before 01/08/2021– can I claim support retrospectively under this policy?***

A: No, this policy comes into effect from 01/08/2021 and does not make provision for sickness absence stipend payments for periods of absence prior to this date.

### ***Q: Will I continue to receive my stipend during short term periods of sickness absence?***

A: Yes, there is no change to the current policy: if you are absent due to illness for a short term period – i.e. a period of less than one month, which does not require an interruption of study – then

your studentship stipend payments will continue as normal. There will be no extension to the overall period of studentship funding. You should ensure that any period of sickness absence is recorded in line with the [Student Absence Policy](#).

**Q: *What happens if my interruption of study on medical grounds extends beyond 13 weeks?***

A: The policy makes provision for sick leave stipend payments for up to 13 weeks in any 12-month period. Where a period of interruption on medical grounds exceeds 13 weeks, stipend payments would be suspended from the 14<sup>th</sup> week onwards, until return to study. The studentship funding period will be extended by up to 13 weeks; the overall programme duration will be extended in line with the full period of interruption (within the limits set out in the [PGR Handbook](#)).

**Q: *What happens if I have an underlying, chronic or fluctuating medical condition which gives rise to short terms absences which cumulatively amount to more than one month?***

A: We are currently looking at the impact and management of intermittent short-term absence linked to underlying chronic and fluctuating medical conditions as part of a wider review of our Student Absence Policy. This review is being undertaken during 2021/22. In order for University-funded students to start to benefit from provision for sickness absence stipend payments from the start of the 2021/22 academic year, the Sickness Absence Stipend Payment Policy has been progressed ahead of other areas of the review. This means that the first version of the policy aligns with the current Student Absence Policy.

Once the wider review is complete, we anticipate that the Sickness Absence Stipend Payment policy will be updated accordingly to reflect any changes to the Student Absence Policy in respect of the management of fluctuating conditions (e.g. any changes to the operation of the policy on medical interruptions).

If you meet the eligibility criteria for the Sickness Absence Stipend Payment policy and you have a medical condition that is significantly impacting your ability to study but is unclear how this policy might apply to you, you should seek advice as early as possible from the relevant PGR support contact. We recommend that you log all instances of short-term (less than one month) sickness absence in line with the [Student Absence Policy](#) so that any cumulative pattern of sickness absence is recorded.

**Q: *I am a University-funded PGR student and I am also employed as a PTA – does this policy apply to me?***

A: This policy applies in respect of your PGR student status. In relation to your employee status, the University's HR policy on sickness absence and sick pay will apply.

**Q: *I am on a University-funded 1+3 or 2+3 programme – does this policy apply to me?***

A: This policy applies to your registration on the research degree element of your programme (the +3). This policy does not apply for the duration of your registration on the taught element of your programme of study (your Masters programme registration).