

Paid Partner Parental Leave Policy Gap

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Executive Summary:

Monash University currently offers RTP scholarship holders 60 working days (12 weeks) paid primary carer leave and 5 working days (1 week) partner leave. This is out of step with the sector, and does not align with the Federal Government Higher Education Support (Commonwealth Scholarships) 2025 Guidelines.

MGA is aware that MGRO is planning to raise the primary carer leave entitlement to align with the new Guidelines, increasing to 100 working days (20 weeks). MGA welcomes and supports this commitment to change.

The 2025 Guidelines, however, leave partner leave to the discretion of the university. MGA has analysed the RTP scholarship conditions of award policies of 39 universities. Our analysis shows that 87% of universities who have specific policies on partner leave offer 10 working days or more. Monash currently is one of the few universities which offer below the industry standard.

Monash is falling behind the sector in delivering quality RTP scholarship conditions which support their students. This has downstream consequences for Monash's long-term strategic goals reflected in both the Impact 2030 Strategy and the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Framework 2022 – 2030.

MGA calls on Monash to update partner leave entitlements for RTP scholarship holders to reflect the industry standard of 10 working days (2 weeks) or more.

Background:

Higher Degree by Research (HDR) students represent a unique cohort unlike both undergraduate and graduate coursework students. HDR students are typically older, with more than half (59%) aged 30 and above, rising to 67% among domestic students across Australia.¹ According to the Monash Graduate Association (MGA) *National Postgraduate Student Survey on Health, Family and Finances*, almost half (49%) of graduate research survey respondents were over 30 years old, and 20% were parents.² At this time in life, it is more common for students to be experiencing other transitions into mid-adulthood, including planning and starting families.

In 2025, the Higher Education Support (Commonwealth Scholarships) Guidelines were updated from the 2017 guidelines. The data presented in this briefing may reflect policies that have yet to be updated in line with the 2025 guidelines. MGA is unable to comment on internal processes and timelines for university policy updates.

Research Training Program (RTP) Scholarship Parental Leave: Higher Education Support (Commonwealth Scholarships) Guidelines - Section 18(6)(f) and (g):

(f) if the student has completed 12 months of study while in receipt of an RTP Stipend, the HEP must provide the student with an entitlement to a minimum of 20 weeks of paid parental leave for each child the student will be the primary carer of, on the birth or adoption of the child.

(g) subject to the usual practice of the HEP, if the student has completed 12 months of study while in receipt of an RTP Stipend, the HEP may choose to approve a period of paid partner leave for the student on the birth or adoption of a child, if the student is the partner of the primary carer of the child.³

At present, Monash HDRs are currently experiencing subpar parental leave entitlements compared to the industry standard. This briefing paper presents sector-wide analysis of paid parental and partner leave for Research Training Program (RTP) scholarship holders, and urges Monash University to immediately update RTP scholarship holder parental leave entitlements to keep pace with the sector.

Parental Leave Entitlements at Monash University

Primary carer/Birthing parent leave:

At present, parents who are primary carer/birthing parent at Monash are entitled to 60 working days (12 weeks) paid leave, in line with the average across most universities.

MGRO plans to adjust the primary carer/birthing parent leave entitlement for RTP scholarship holders to reflect the 2025 Federal Government Guidelines (100 working days). As indicated in Table 1 and Table 2 (below), most institutions will be updating their policies to reflect this change.

Partner leave:

For full-time students receiving an RTP stipend, Monash currently offers a maximum of five working days (1 week) of paid parental leave within the tenure of the award. For part-time students, the entitlement is five working days “paid within the tenure of the award paid at the part-time stipend rate.”⁴

Additional conditions to access this leave include that it cannot be granted within the first 12 month of the award, and cannot commence any earlier than 6 weeks before the expected birth of the child, nor 6 weeks after the birth of the child. For cases of adoption, paid parental leave commences from the date the “child is permanently placed for adoption.”

This entitlement is among the **lowest across the sector**, placing **Monash behind the industry standard practice** of 10 working days (2 weeks) and well below the best performers among the sector who offer between 15 working days (3 weeks) to 60 working days (12 weeks) to partners.

To gain a greater understanding of RTP scholarship parental leave practices across Australia’s university sector, MGA has conducted a policy review presented below. Table 1 presents an assessment of parental leave policy affecting both primary carer and partner leave entitlements. The table is structured to indicate three tiers of entitlement, 1 – Above Industry Standard; 2 – Industry Standard, 3 – Below Industry Standard. Table 2 extracts the data specifically on the Group of 8 universities to highlight Monash’ performance in relation to its sector counterparts.

Table 1. Australian University RTP Scholarship Parental Leave Policies: League Table
 Ranked by partner (non-birthing parent) paid leave entitlement under RTP stipend scholarship conditions

University	State	★ Partner Leave	Primary Carer Leave
TIER 1 – ABOVE INDUSTRY STANDARD			
Macquarie University	NSW	60 working days (12 weeks)	60 working days (12 weeks)
University of Sydney	NSW	60 working days (12 weeks)	60 working days (12 weeks)
Australian National University	ACT	60 working days (12 weeks)	60 working days (12 weeks)
James Cook University	QLD	60 working days (12 weeks)	60 working days (combined)
University of Technology Sydney	NSW	20 working days (4 weeks)	60 working days (12 weeks)
Swinburne University	VIC	20 working days (4 weeks)	60 working days (12 weeks)
RMIT University	VIC	15 working days (3 weeks)	60 working days (12 weeks)
La Trobe University	VIC	15 working days (3 weeks)	100 working days (20 weeks)
TIER 2 – INDUSTRY STANDARD			
Charles Sturt University	NSW	10 working days (2 weeks)	60 working days (12 weeks)
Curtin University	WA	10 working days (2 weeks)	60 working days (12 weeks)
Federation University Australia	VIC	10 working days (2 weeks)	60 working days (12 weeks)
Griffith University	QLD	10 working days (2 weeks)	60 working days (12 weeks)
Adelaide University	SA	10 working days (2 weeks)	60 working days (12 weeks)
University of Canberra	ACT	10 working days (2 weeks)	60 working days (12 weeks)
University of Newcastle	NSW	10 working days (2 weeks)	100 working days (20 weeks)
University of Queensland	QLD	10 working days (2 weeks)	60 working days (12 weeks)
University of Tasmania	TAS	10 working days (2 weeks)	60 working days (12 weeks)
University of Western Australia	WA	10 working days (2 weeks)	60 working days (12 weeks)
University of New South Wales	NSW	10 working days (2 weeks)	60 working days (12 weeks)
Queensland University of Technology	QLD	10 working days (2 weeks)	60 working days (12 weeks)
Australian Catholic University	Multi	10 working days (2 weeks)	60 working days (12 weeks)
Central Queensland University	QLD	10 working days (2 weeks)	60 working days (12 weeks)
Edith Cowan University	WA	10 working days (2 weeks)	60 working days (12 weeks)
University of Southern Queensland	QLD	10 working days (2 weeks)	60 working days (12 weeks)
Bond University	QLD	10 working days (2 weeks)	60 working days (12 weeks)
TIER 3 – BELOW INDUSTRY STANDARD			
University of Melbourne	VIC	5 working days (1 week)	100 working days (20 weeks)
Deakin University	VIC	5 working days (1 week)	60 working days (12 weeks)
Monash University	VIC	5 working days (1 week)	60 working days (12 weeks)
Murdoch University	WA	5 working days (1 week)	Up to 1 year (pay unspecified)

Table 2. Parental Leave for HDR Scholars: G08 Australian University Policy Comparison

University	Group	State	★ Partner Leave	Primary Carer Leave
University of Sydney	Go8	NSW	60 working days (12 weeks)	60 working days (12 weeks)
Australian National University	Go8	ACT	60 working days (12 weeks)	60 working days (12 weeks)
Adelaide University	Go8	SA	10 working days (2 weeks)	60 working days (12 weeks)
University of Queensland	Go8	QLD	10 working days (2 weeks)	60 working days (12 weeks)

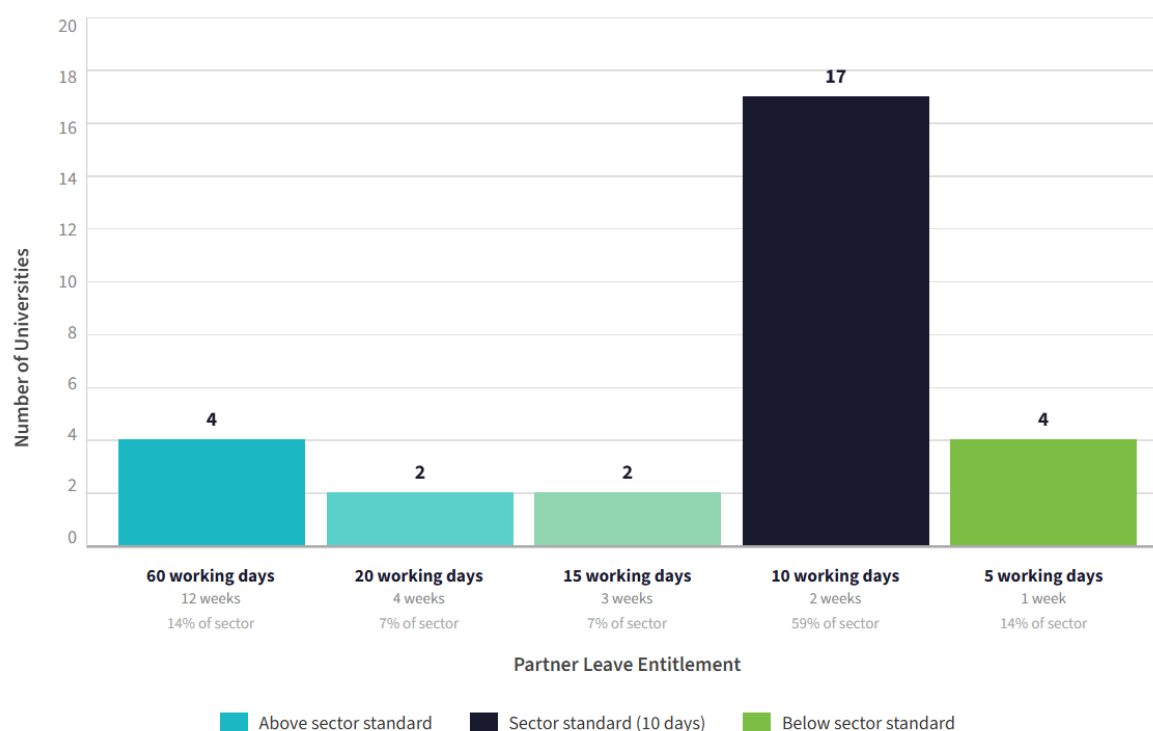
University	Group	State	★ Partner Leave	Primary Carer Leave
University of Western Australia	Go8	WA	10 working days (2 weeks)	60 working days (12 weeks)
University of New South Wales	Go8	NSW	10 working days (2 weeks)	60 working days (12 weeks)
University of Melbourne	Go8	VIC	5 working days (1 week)	100 working days (20 weeks)
Monash University	Go8	VIC	5 working days (1 week)	60 working days (12 weeks)

Key findings for partner leave entitlements:

Of the 39 universities assessed for partner parental leave entitlements of RTP scholarship holders, only 29 had publicly available and specific guidance on partner parental leave. Below is a comparison and discussion of the publicly stated policy entitlements:

- 14% offer up to 60 working days (12 weeks)
- 7% offer 20 working days (4 weeks)
- 7 % off 15 working days (3 weeks)
- 59% offer 10 working days (2 weeks)
- 14% offer 5 working days (1 week) – **Monash University sits here**

HDR Scholarship Partner Leave Entitlements, Australian Universities 2025–26



The industry standard practice is to offer 10 working days (2 weeks) leave for partners at or around the time of birth of their child. This practice is not specified in the Federal Government’s Higher Education Support Guidelines, but rather appears to be an industry-led practice. Though HDR students often occupy multiple professional identities in the higher education ecosystem – as student, researcher, teaching associate and so on – these entitlements for RTP scholarship holders do not automatically reflect the standard offered to staff.

A more troubling finding is the number of universities – including Monash University – that sit below the standard practiced across the industry. Four universities (Melbourne, Deakin, Monash, Murdoch) offer only 5 working days (1 week), which represents 14% of the sector but includes some of its most prominent institutions.

The 28% of universities at the top of partner leave offering – 14% at 60 days; 7% at 20 days; 7% at 15 days – demonstrate leadership in the sector, and show that it is possible to raise the standard leave entitlement practice for partners.

Key point: The sector has converged on a norm of 10 working days (1 week) leave for partners. This is still a low leave entitlement for new parents even if they are not considered the ‘primary’ parent. Importantly, the stance each university has taken on partner parental leave directly affects matters of equity in HDR.

Monash is falling behind:

Partner leave is left to the discretion of universities under the 2025 Guidelines. This reveals an important policy gap that the sector faces. Majority of universities (87%) have converged on 10 working days or more for partner leave entitlements. Monash is one of the few behind this sector standard.

Implications:

The misalignment between university policies and the 2025 guidelines, as well as the different treatment between primary carer leave and partner leave echoes antiquated ideas about parental responsibility, particularly in treating the second parent as less essential than the 'primary'. In short, this policy practice acts to 'invisibilise' HDR students who are becoming parents (Duffy et al. 2025). This is unsurprising, given a recent student from Duffy et al. (2025) on Australian university policies impacting student parents found that the "majority of HEIs framed a student's childcare obligations within a neoliberal context, positioning caring as a 'personal' or 'private' concern" (p. 9).⁵ In contrast, at a national level parental leave has been recognised, in law, as something which both parents need and ought to be entitled to. Recent changes have led to government paid parental leave being flexible and shared across both parents at their discretion. As of 1 July 2025, paid parental leave offered by the Australian Government was raised to 120 working days (24 weeks), with another increase of 10 working days (bringing the total to 26 weeks or 130 working days) due on 1 July 2026. Importantly, this entitlement is encouraged to be shared between both parents, with 15 working days (3 weeks) reserved specifically for the partner.⁶

Ultimately Monash's current policy approach sends a message to students that partners' leave is a low priority. This reinforces heteronormative gender norms, that one (typically male) parent is the breadwinner, and one (typically female) parent is the full-time carer. However, many families do not subscribe to this model, and distribute caring work across both parents. Student testimonies highlight the reality of parental leave policies in practice and how this affects students who are thinking about starting families or have already:

"My wife is expected to give birth to our first born child and I am wanting to take some leave from my PhD to care for my child. In looking through my options, it seems my paid parental leave options are both terrible and confusing... I would also like to point out how ancient both the wording and duration of leave is. I am expected to return to studying 5 days after my child is born and leave my wife to solely care for him."

"It's tough. As an older student I have had to take a significant pay reduction, in my early 30's. This hits pretty hard on life's plans; housing, starting a family etc. In honesty it is the one factor that I worry may prevent my completion of the PhD."

MGA calls on Monash University to update Parental Leave entitlements for HDR students

In light of the analysis presented in this brief, the MGA calls on Monash University to take the following actions to address this policy gap:

ACTIONS:

1. Immediately raise partner leave to 10 working days (2 weeks)
2. Prioritise fulfilment of commitment to raise primary carer leave to 100 working days (20 weeks)
3. Immediately adopt flexible leave sharing to allow for partners to increase leave if they become primary carer within 12 months of birth of child
4. Audit and assess partner leave to explore raising this above industry standard practice, positioning Monash as a leader in the sector and furthering the goals and commitments of the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Framework 2022-2030.

As we have highlighted, Monash University's parental leave policies are out of step with the rest of industry, and treat students significantly differently to staff (even though many HDR students are relied on to supplement the university's teaching and research workforce). Monash HDR students may be encouraged to use their annual leave in the absence of extended parental leave, however this would counter the purpose of annual leave defended in labour organisation and law as a right which entitles a worker to rest and recreation time. Advice on the Fair Work Ombudsman website refers to annual leave as "holiday pay", understood to be a period of "having time off from work."⁷ In our contemporary era, it is widely acknowledged that care work is work.⁸ It is far from the restful and recreational period that annual leave is supposed to protect. Failing to properly support students who become new parents in their caring and family responsibilities sets them up for greater stress and poorer mental and physical health, something which is already a known issues for many graduate students at Monash.⁹ This also risks delaying research progression and, thus, timely completion, therefore running counter to the priorities of Monash as outlined in Monash' Impact 2030 Strategic Plan.¹⁰

Further, if Monash is to deliver on its Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Framework 2022-2030 commitments – including to focus on all members of the Monash community, to strive towards accountability and to be agile – HDR students who are becoming parents (regardless of their birthing status) must be recognised as in need of decent leave entitlements. The EDI Framework explicitly calls to "empower all members of our [Monash] community to advance equity, diversity and inclusion", to "go beyond compliance, and instead create an environment for creative, innovation solutions to complex social issues." And to "keep developing, refining and evolving our practice through regular climate checks with our community".¹¹ These ideals are compromised by the current parental leave policy for RTP scholarship holders at Monash. Without addressing RTP scholarship leave entitlement deficit for partners, this may lead to a forced choice where parents become locked out of graduate research participation, resulting in greater inequities.

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- ¹ Department of Education (DoE), (2024). '2024 Section 2 – All students', *Australian Government*. Available from: <https://www.education.gov.au/higher-education-statistics/resources/2024-section-2-all-students>
- ² Edwards, R. (2025). 'Graduate Research at Monash: Student Experiences, Challenges and Opportunities for Enhancement', *Monash Graduate Association*: Melbourne. Available from: <https://mga.monash.edu/pageassets/voice/reports-feedback/Graduate-Research-at-Monash-Student-Experiences-Challenges-and-Opportunities-for-Enhancement-Report.pdf>
- ³ Australian Government (2025). *Higher Education Support (Commonwealth Scholarships) Guidelines*. Available from: <https://www.legislation.gov.au/F2025L01474/asmade/text>
- ⁴ Monash University, *Managing your Scholarships*. Available from: https://www.monash.edu/graduate-research/support-and-resources/understanding/managing-your-scholarship#tabs_3676357-04
- ⁵ Duffy, S., O'Shea, M., Ewald, A., & Gilbert, E. (2025). Problematising the invisibility of student parents in Australian higher education. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2025.2573979>
- ⁶ Services Australia (2025). *Parental Leave Pay – How much can you get*. Available from: <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/how-much-parental-leave-pay-you-can-get?context=64479>
- ⁷ Fair Work Ombudsman. (2025). 'Annual Leave' Available from: <https://www.fairwork.gov.au/leave/annual-leave>
- ⁸ Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (n.d). *National Strategy to Achieve gender Equality: Discussion Paper*. Australian Government. Available from": <https://www.pmc.gov.au/resources/national-strategy-achieve-gender-equality-discussion-paper/current-state/burden-care>; Bahous, S. (2024). *Care work: Building thriving, equitable, and sustainable economies and societies for generations of today and tomorrow*. United Nations Women. Available from: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news-stories/speech/2024/10/care-work-building-thriving-equitable-and-sustainable-economies-and-societies-for-generations-of-today-and-tomorrow#:~:text=Opening%20remarks%20by%20Under-Secretary,unpaid%20care%20work%20than%20men.>
- ⁹ Edwards (2025). 'Graduate Research and Monash'.
- ¹⁰ Monash University, *Impact 2030: Strategic Plan 2021-2030*. Available from: <https://www.monash.edu/about/strategic-direction/strategic-plan> ref
- ¹¹ Monash University, *Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Framework 2022 – 2023*. Available from: https://www.monash.edu/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/3225358/EDI-Framework-Booklet.pdf

See attached 'Appendix: Supplementary Policy Information Australian University RTP Scholarship Parental Leave' for more information about specific leave entitlements.

Appendix: Supplementary Policy Information -- Australian University RTP Scholarship Partner/Parental Leave

University	Policy	Excerpt	Notes
Macquarie University	https://www.mq.edu.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0006/126591/0/Graduate-Research-Scholarships-Conditions-of-Award_October-2024.pdf	“Scholarship holders who have completed 12 months of their Scholarship are eligible for up to 60 working days paid parental leave during the tenure of the Scholarship if they have given birth, adopted a child, are primary care givers with family responsibilities or are partners of the woman giving birth.”	No primary/partner distinction. All new parents receive up to 12 weeks paid leave.
University of Sydney	https://www.sydney.edu.au/content/dam/corporate/documents/scholarships/rtp-scholarships/tcs---rtp-domestic.pdf	“Once holders of the Scholarship have completed twelve months of their award, they are entitled to a maximum of twelve weeks paid parental leave during the tenure of the Scholarship. Students applying for paid parental leave should do so at least four weeks prior leave commencement date.”	No primary/partner distinction. All new parents receive up to 12 weeks paid leave.
Australian National University	https://policies.anu.edu.au/ppi/document/ANUP_7926390	“Recipients who have completed 12 months of their Award and who are the partner of a person who is the primary caregiver of a new child (as per paragraphs 114 to 116), by birth or legal adoption, may be entitled to five days paid partner parental leave.”	Partner parental leave entitlement is 5 days however, if partner becomes primary care giver, they are entitled to 55 days paid leave (minus the 5 days partner parental leave if taken).
James Cook University	https://www.jcu.edu.au/policy/academic-governance/research-education/research-training-program-rtp-scholarship-policy-interim-policy	“Parental leave of up to 60 working days of paid maternity/adoption/partner leave after 12 months of continuous RTP Scholarship support.”	Note this policy explicitly frames as “up to” meaning it could potentially be less time for partners.
University of Technology Sydney	https://utsd8.prod.acquia-sites.com/sites/default/files/2025-03/grs-coa-2025-research-training-program-scholarship-rtps.pdf	“RTP Stipend recipients who are partners of women giving birth within the duration of their RTP Stipend award, and who have completed twelve (12) months of their RTP Stipend are entitled to four (4) weeks of paid parenting leave, which may be taken at any time in the three-month period following the birth of a child or adoption date. This period of leave is added to the duration of the RTP Stipend. Unpaid	

		parenting leave may be accessed through the scholarship leave provision."	
Swinburne University	https://www.swinburne.edu.au/content/dam/media/docs/RTPS_Conditions_of_Award_December_2024.pdf	"Domestic HDR students who will be secondary carers and have completed at least 12 months of their scholarship may apply for up to 20 days of Paid Parental Leave, subject to the usual practice of the University."	Note: This policy specific "up to" leaving some ambiguity on guaranteed access to this leave provision.
RMIT University	https://www.rmit.edu.au/research/research-degrees/terms-and-conditions	"Candidates who are partners of women giving birth during a research scholarship and who have completed 12 months of their research scholarship may be entitled to a maximum of 3 weeks of paid parental leave over the duration of the scholarship. Subject to the usual practice of RMIT, paid leave may also be approved if the candidate has adopted a child."	Note: paid leave extends the length of the scholarship.
La Trobe University	https://policies.latrobe.edu.au/download.php?associated=1&id=175	"A maximum of fifteen (15) business days (FTE) paid parenting leave within the tenure of the RTP for candidates who have held their RTP Stipend for twelve (12) months, and who are partners of primary carers of a newly born or adopted child."	
Charles Sturt University	https://policy.csu.edu.au/document/view-current.php?id=431&version=1	"Candidates who have completed 12 months of their Scholarship may be entitled to 10 days paid parental leave if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • they are adopting a child. • they are the partner of the woman giving birth; or • This leave does not extend the tenure of the Scholarship." 	Distinction made between primary and partner parental leave, with partner only entitled to 10 working days.
Curtin University	https://s30991.pcdn.co/study/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2025/07/HDR_Scholarship-Conditions-of-Award_072025-4.pdf	"10 working days paid parenting leave if your partner is giving birth during the Scholarship Term. This period of leave is to be taken anytime in the 80 working days immediately after the birth."	Distinction made between primary and partner parental leave, with partner only entitled to 10 working days.
Federation University Australia	https://policy.federation.edu.au/research/procedures/hdr_candidate_selection/ch01.php	"Partner Leave: A candidate who is the partner of a woman giving birth may be entitled to 10 working days paid parenting leave if they are not the primary care giver. If they are the primary caregiver they may be entitled to an additional 50	Distinction made between primary and partner parental leave, with partner only entitled to 10 working days. However, Partner is entitled to further 50 days if they become the primary carer.

		weeks of unpaid carer's leave."	
Griffith University	https://www.griffith.edu.au/research-study/scholarships/au-gov-research-training-program	"10 working days paid per child/children, remainder is unpaid: A candidate who is the partner of a primary carer of a newly born or adopted child. Certification must be provided. Not available within the first 12 months of candidature."	Entitles to 8 weeks partner leave, but only 10 days (2 weeks paid).
Adelaide University	https://adelaideuni.edu.au/content/dam/adelaideuniversity/documents/research/pdfs/2026%20AURS%20Conditions%20of%20Award-Final.pdf	"Graduate research students who are partners of the birth parent or primary adoptive parent and who have been enrolled for a period of over 12 months full time are able to apply for up to 10 working days of paid parental leave. This period will extend the normal duration of the award."	
University of Canberra	https://www.canberra.edu.au/uc-research/graduate-research/university-research-scholarships/documents/AGRT-P-Stipend-Scholarship-Conditions-of-Award-2025-v-241216.pdf	"Scholarship recipients whose partners are giving birth, and who have completed 12 months full-time (or part-time equivalent) of their award, are entitled to a period of 10 working days paid parental leave at the time of the birth. Parental leave may be taken one week before the birth, and up to five weeks after the birth of the child."	
University of Newcastle	https://policies.newcastle.edu.au/document/view-current.php?id=67	"RTP Stipend scholars who are partners may receive up to 10 working days paid partner leave for a childbirth or adoption occurring within the tenure of the stipend scholarship. For the purposes of this clause "partner" means the partner of the primary carer, which includes a spouse or de facto. Paid partner leave must be taken during the three-week period prior to the expected birth or placement of the child, or up to six months after the actual birth or placement of the child."	
University of Queensland	https://policies.uq.edu.au/document/view-current.php?id=250	"If the recipient is the partner of the primary carer for a child, the recipient is entitled to a maximum of ten working days parental leave during the scholarship."	

University of Tasmania	https://www.utas.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0005/189977/9/RTP-2026-Conditions.pdf	<p>“Scholarship holders whose partner has given birth, or who are the partner of the main carer of a child placed with them for adoption or long-term foster care, may take up to a maximum of 2 weeks paid parental leave.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paid parental leave may only be taken once and after the first 12 calendar months of the scholarship, excluding periods of scholarship suspension.” 	
University of Western Australia	https://www.asethub.uwa.edu.au/api/public/content/ba27d9d65b8649d2aadf759563d38132?v=b56bc98e	<p>“A scholarship recipient may be eligible for up to 10 working days of paid partner leave, to be taken within the first three months following a child’s birth or adoption placement, provided the scholarship recipient: (i) has completed at least 12 months of their scholarship; (ii) is the partner of the primary carer.</p> <p>If the scholarship holder later becomes the primary carer during the primary stipend period, they may access up to 60 working days of primary carer or adoption leave”</p>	<p>Industry standard with provision for partner to receive additional 60 days paid leave should they become primary carer.</p>
University of New South Wales	https://www.unsw.edu.au/content/dam/pdfs/governance/policy/2022-01-policies/hdrs-scholarshipsprocedure.pdf	<p>“If the scholarship holder is the partner of the primary carer of the child, the holder is entitled to a maximum of ten working days paid parental leave during the scholarship, at the time of the birth or adoption.”</p>	
Queensland University of Technology	https://cms.qut.edu.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0014/1161005/qut-research-training-program-stipend-scholarship-conditions.pdf	<p>“Parenting Leave – for partners of people giving birth or for primary carer partners (to be taken at the time of birth or adoption).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - After completion of 12 months of the degree - Max of 10 working days combined total over the duration of the degree. - Max of 50 working days combined total over the duration of the degree for primary carers.” 	<p>Standard 10 days paid leave matching industry, with addition 50 days should the partner become the primary carer.</p>
Australian Catholic University	https://policy.acu.edu.au/document/view.php?id=240	<p>A student who is the partner and has received 12 months of full-time RTP Stipend Scholarship support (or 24 months part-time), is entitled to a maximum of 2 weeks at full-time enrolment or 4 weeks at part-time enrolment paid parental leave associated with the birth of an infant or</p>	

		adoption of a pre-school age child during the lifetime of the RTP Stipend. The student's period of support for the RTP Stipend Scholarship will be extended by the period of approved paid parental leave (refer clause (47) of this Policy)."	
Central Queensland University	https://delivery-cqucontenthub.stylelabs.cloud/api/public/content/research-training-program-and-research-higher-degree-scholarships-policy-and-procedure.pdf	"Candidates who have completed 12 months of the tenure of the award are entitled to a duration of paid parental leave if they are the partner for a person who has a birth or adoptive event, and that event occurs during the Scholarship Stipend period. The duration of parental leave will be as per the terms available to employees under the Central Queensland University Enterprise Agreement. Parental leave may not extend to candidates who are in receipt of a scholarship partly or fully funded by an industry partner."	The CQU Enterprise Agreement states: "Partner leave • Short paid - up to two weeks paid for an eligible fixed-term and continuing employee, which may be taken while the birth parent is on authorised leave. • Short unpaid - up to two weeks unpaid for an eligible casual employee, which may be taken while the birth parent is on authorised leave." https://delivery-cqucontenthub.stylelabs.cloud/api/public/content/central-queensland-university-enterprise-agreement.pdf
Edith Cowan University	https://intranet.ecu.edu.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0010/1047556/RTP-Conditions-of-Award-Final-10-March-2025.pdf	"Recipients who are the partner of a birth mother or an adoptive parent, and who are not the primary care giver, and have completed 12 months of their scholarship, may apply for single continuous period of 2 weeks paid partner leave immediately after the birth or placement of the child."	
University of Southern Queensland	https://policy.unisq.edu.au/documents/21720PL#4.5	"If the Scholarship holder is the partner of the primary carer of the child, the holder is entitled to a maximum of 10 working days' parental leave during the Scholarship."	
Bond University	https://bond.edu.au/sites/default/files/2022-11/Research%20Training%20Program%20%28RTP%29%20Scholarship%20Policy%20RES%204.2.pdf	"Award holders who are not pregnant, who have completed twelve (12) months of their RTP Living Stipend, are entitled to ten (10) working days, pro rata, of paid Parental Leave at the time of the birth or adoption."	
University of Melbourne	https://gradresearch.unimelb.edu.au/scholarships/graduate-research-scholarship-terms-and-conditions	"If you have completed 12 months of study, you are entitled to 5 days (full-time study equivalent) paid partner leave for each child to whom your partner is the main carer of, on birth or adoption. You must take paid partner leave as continuous leave within 52 weeks from the birth or adoption of the child."	

Deakin University	https://www.deakin.edu.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0029/175583/2026-RTP-Scholarship-Terms-and-Conditions.pdf	<p>“Awardees who are partners of those giving birth or adopting while receiving the Award stipend, and have completed 12 months of their Award, may be entitled to a maximum of one week’s paid leave at the time of birth.”</p>	
Monash University	https://www.monash.edu/graduate-research/support-and-resources/understanding/managing-your-scholarship#tabs_3676357-04	<p>“5 working days paid within the tenure of the award.”</p>	<p>Note: Leave must be taken within a solid block of five days, and should commence no earlier/later than 6 weeks at birth, and is only entitled post 12 months of candidature.</p>
Murdoch University	https://cdn.murdoch.edu.au/mu-docs/default-source/published_files/graduate-research-degrees-regulations.pdf?sfvrsn=77c2aec_5	<p>“Partner Leave, for up to five days, which may be granted to partners of the primary carer at the time of the birth or adoption.”</p>	<p>It is unclear from the policy whether the 1 year of parental leave is paid. The policy is clear that partners are entitled to a short period of five working days for leave at the time of birth/adoption.</p>
University of Wollongong	https://policies.uow.edu.au/document/view-current.php?id=62&version=1	<p>“Once stipend scholarship holders have completed 12 months of their scholarship, they are entitled to a maximum of 60 days maternity/parental leave during the tenure of their scholarship. Scholarship holders who have not completed 12 months of their scholarship may access unpaid maternity/parental leave through the suspension provision. Any periods of maternity leave will not count towards the period of stipend support.”</p>	<p>It is possible that partners are entitled to the equivalent leave of birthing parents, given the language in the policy does not make a distinction between primary and partner recipients of parental leave.</p>
Flinders University	https://student.s.flinders.edu.au/finances-and-admin/support/scholarships/higher-degree-by-research-scholarship-information	<p>“Award holders who are partners of the person giving birth while receiving a RTP stipend and who have completed 12 months of their RTP stipend may be entitled to a period of paid parenting leave at the time of the birth or adoption, subject to the usual practice of the University. Approved parenting leave will extend the period of support of the RTP Stipend and fee offset.”</p>	<p>The policy refers to ‘usual practice of the University’. For staff, partner leave consists of 15 days (3 weeks) of paid leave. https://staff.flinders.edu.au/employee-resources/benefits-pay/leave</p>
University of New England	https://policies.une.edu.au/document/view-current.php?id=380&version=1	<p>“Students receiving an RTP Stipend who are partners of women giving birth, and who have completed 12 months of the RTP Stipend, may be entitled to a period of paid parental leave at the time of the birth or adoption, subject</p>	<p>The policy refers to ‘usual practice of the UNE’. For staff, partner leave consists of up to 40 working days (8 weeks), with only 15 working days (3 weeks) paid according to UNE 2023-2026 Enterprise Agreement: https://nsw.nteu.au/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/UNE-Professional-Staff-Enterprise-Agreement-2023-2026.pdf</p>

		to the usual practice of UNE.”	
University of Sunshine Coast	https://www.unisc.edu.au/research/research-students/hdr-scholarships/hdr-scholarship-conditions/research-training-program-scholarship-schedule-of-conditions	No policy evident on partner leave.	No specific partner leave provision, however, personal leave entitlements include child care and family reasons. It is unclear if these provisions would apply in the context of partner parental leave. https://www.unisc.edu.au/about/policies-and-procedures/higher-degrees-by-research-candidature-progression-guidelines
Victoria University	https://policy.vu.edu.au/document/view.php?id=397#major10	“Students who have completed 12 months of their Stipend and are partners of women giving birth or partners of a person adopting a child while receiving a Stipend, may be entitled to a period of paid Concurrent Partner Leave at the time of the birth or adoption, subject to the usual practice of Victoria University and in accordance with clause 56 ‘Concurrent partner leave’ of the Victoria University Enterprise Agreement 2025.”	According to the Victoria University Enterprise Agreement, Clause 56: “A staff member, other than a casual or sessional, who is a spouse or partner of a birthing parent or Primary Care Giver” is entitled to “6 weeks paid leave plus 6 weeks unpaid leave”. https://nteuau.sharepoint.com/:b:/s/documents/EVcjOokdZWlCtkcFVl2gADoBo5l0iegHlmYWQdWb1L6Tcw?e=ANgnM9 Based on this, it is likely that VU RTP Scholarship holders who are partners are entitled to up to 30 working days (6 weeks) paid, and 30 workings days (6 weeks) unpaid leave
Charles Darwin University	https://policies.cdu.edu.au/view-current.php?id=3	“If candidates are a primary carer or a partner of a primary carer of a newborn or newly adopted child, or a birthing parent who is due to give birth within 20 weeks, they are eligible to apply for parental leave. Parental leave allows a candidate to suspend their enrolment for up to 12 months.”	There is partner leave but it is unclear whether there is paid partner leave. Only specific advise on suspending candidature.
Southern Cross University	https://policies.scu.edu.au/view-current.php?id=00256	“After completing 12 months of study, RTP Stipend Scholarship recipients who are the primary carer are entitled to a minimum of 20 weeks paid parental leave for each child on birth or adoption. Partner leave may be provided at the University’s discretion.”	Policy states parental leave is minimum 20 weeks. Partner leave is subject to discretion of the university, meaning no guarantee of length or whether it is paid.
University of Notre Dame	https://www.notredame.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/2010/Policy-RTP-Scholarships.pdf	“HDR students who are awarded an RTP Stipend are eligible to receive paid leave as defined in the Conditions of Award for Australian Government Research Training Program (RTP) Stipend Scholarship.”	Leave provisions are available however specific detail in the ‘Conditions of Award for Australian Government Research Training Program (RTP) Stipend Scholarship’ policy document not publicly available.
Western Sydney University	https://policies.westernsydney.edu.au/document/view-current.php?id=254&version=4	“Recipients who have undertaken 12 continuous months of their candidature and have been in receipt of a stipend scholarship stipend for 12 continuous	Parental leave entitlements are available, but there is no specified leave entitlement specifically for partners of primary/birthing parents.

		months are entitled to a maximum of 60 working days paid parental (maternity or paternity) leave during the duration of the stipend scholarship tenure."	
Torrens University	https://torrens.blackboard.com/bbcswebdav/xi-d-7785484_1	"A maximum of 60 working days paid maternity leave upon student's completion of 12 months of their RTP stipend. Paid leave may also apply if the student chooses to adopt a child. Parental leave after the completion of 12 months or prorata for part-time students in accordance with University entitlements."	RTP scholarships policy does have provision of entitlement to 'maternity leave', however does not mention partner leave explicitly. There is an acknowledgement of parental leave, but this is unspecified regarding parental status (e.g. primary/secondary) or duration.