



## FAQs for Doctoral Students: Scholarships and Family

### → Are there family-friendly rules for scholarships?

Because a scholarship does not constitute an employment relationship, the statutory maternity leave and parental leave rules do not apply. Most scholarship organizations have a number of rules related to families. Ask your respective scholarship organization about support.

### → Can I interrupt my scholarship to fulfill parental obligations?

Scholarships can usually be interrupted for familial reasons, although financial benefits generally cease, as well. Scholarship recipients are not eligible to apply for unemployment benefits (Arbeitslosengeld I). Review your options for financing your costs of living (see information on the maternity benefit, parental pay, and child benefit).

### → As a doctoral student, can I apply for a semester of academic leave?

Doctoral students, like all other students, may apply for up to three years of parental leave.

### → Whom do I notify about statutory maternity leave and parental leave?

The scope of the protection of working mothers act (Gesetz zum Schutze der erwerbstätigen Mutter, MuSchG) was expanded on 1 January 2018 to also include students. If you are pregnant, notify the University as soon as possible to ensure your full protection rights pursuant to the MuSchG and that the University can implement the necessary protection measures. Contact your faculty's doctoral studies office to notify the University of your pregnancy and with any further questions you may have or information you may need. Also inform your scholarship organization that you are pregnant in order to clarify the funding conditions.

### → What forms do I need to fill out for this?

Simply send an informal request to your doctoral studies office or scholarship organization.

### → As a scholarship holder, am I entitled to the maternity benefit?

The maternity benefit, which is paid by the insurance provider throughout the period of employment prohibition for mothers (six weeks prior to and eight weeks after birth), depends on which type of insurance you have (private insurance, state insurance, family insurance). Ask your insurance provider whether you are eligible for the maternity benefit. You are not entitled to employer contributions.



→ **As a scholarship holder with a child, am I entitled to the child benefit?**

Yes, you are entitled to the child benefit as a scholarship holder. If you are a non-EU citizen, entitlement to the child benefit depends on your respective residency permit. Also ask about the supplementary child allowance.

→ **Am I entitled to parental pay as a scholarship holder?**

Scholarship holders are fundamentally entitled to parental pay, which is paid out for 12 or 14 months. The scholarship is not considered income, however. Scholarship holders without other forms of income therefore receive the basic €300 allowance in parental pay. Parental pay is paid out from the date of your child's birth onward. If your insurance provider pays the maternity benefit, it will be offset against the parental pay. You can also apply for the child benefit (see above).

→ **Are there financial support options that I can apply for from my scholarship organization?**

There is no standard rule in this regard. However, you should ask your scholarship organization about the possibility of a family allowance, a lump sum for childcare, or retrieval of funds in advance.

→ **Is it possible to extend my scholarship to balance doctoral work and family obligations?**

That depends on the total scholarship sum and your respective scholarship organization. Contact your scholarship organization and ask. The Equal Opportunity Unit at Universität Hamburg offers a completion scholarship through the Equal Opportunity Fund for students with a child or a family member requiring care.

→ **Is the birth of a child generally seen as a valid reason for extending a scholarship period?**

It depends on the provenance of the funds. Parental leave is not explicitly regulated by the Hamburg act for the promotion of doctoral and early career researchers and artists (Hamburgisches Gesetz zur Förderung des wissenschaftlichen und künstlerischen Nachwuchses, HmbNFG). As in cases of illness, the scholarship can continue to be paid out during statutory maternity leave or be extended by this period accordingly; for State Graduate Funding Program scholarships, only if the scholarship is interrupted for this period (without continuing to be paid out). Depending on the scholarship type, partial scholarships for students who must provide childcare during a period of parental leave may be available. In this case, the monthly funding rate is reduced while the scholarship period is extended accordingly. Contact your scholarship organization for details.



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**Take advantage of the information and advising services on offer around the Universität Hamburg campus.**

\* For information and a list of advisory offices on the compatibility of doctoral work and family, refer to the **Family Office's website**: <https://www.uni-hamburg.de/familienbuero/wissenschaft-mit-kind.html>

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