SMSAS Guidelines for Maternity Leave

The university has a number of “Family friendly practices”, which include policies relating to maternity leave, see http://www.kent.ac.uk/hr-staffinformation/policies/family/. These policies apply to all Kent staff. In addition, SMSAS makes the following guidelines for academic staff returning from maternity leave. These guidelines have been written for academic members of staff, Heads of Group and the Head of School, to assist the member of staff’s return to work. Staff are also encouraged to consult one of the School’s EDI officers.

1. The returning staff member is to have a reduced teaching load, similar to that for a member of staff on the first year of probation, for a period of 12 months from the return.
2. Where leave commences midway through an academic year, due consideration should be given to the teaching load completed prior to the leave period.
3. Where possible, teaching should be of modules which the member of staff has taught previously. Planning for this should be made before the leave commences.
4. The normal expectation is that a large administrative role is not taken on in the 12 months from the return to work.
5. Teaching and administrative duties should be discussed by the member of staff and the Head of Group before commencing maternity leave, during maternity leave and on return to work. The member of staff is given the option of having a School EDI officer involved in these discussions.
6. The teaching duties agreed should be documented in a written plan that should be sent to the Chair and Deputy Chair of the SMSAS EDI committee for approval. In cases of disagreement, the Head of School will arbitrate. Any changes to the plan should also be approved.
7. Keeping in Touch Days should be used to support the member of staff’s return to work, for example involving research or external scholarship activities rather than teaching, marking or administration. Discussions with a PhD student would be appropriate.
8. Appropriate arrangements for the member of staff’s PhD students should be made, possibly involving an external person.
9. On return, members of staff should have an enhanced travel budget, which can be spent on visitors to Kent, as well as travel. This should be a similar allowance to that for a member of staff on probation. Any unspent funds from this year should be carried forward.
10. Members of staff should retain use of their offices during maternity leave, where possible.

Peter Clarkson, 16 February 2016 (updated by Rowena Paget, 6 October 2016).