

## **Student Maternity, Paternity and Adoption Policy**

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The purpose of this policy is to:

Set out the advice and support available to students who become pregnant, adopt a child or wish to take paternity related absence during the course of their studies.

Detail the actions students and University staff are expected to follow to develop a personalised Maternity/Paternity and Adoption Support Plan (MPASP) for the student which supports both their learning and their health. Being pregnant is not, in and of itself, a valid reason for applying for extenuating circumstance. The development of the MPASP is the correct procedure to follow to ensure appropriate support and adjustments are in place for the student.

Pregnancy and maternity are protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. This policy will provide additional support to students who are pregnant or prospective parents/ adoptive parents. The policy is in line with the [Equality Challenge Unit's recommendations](#) and offers a 'best practice' approach towards pregnancy and maternity support. The University will ensure that these students are not treated less favourably than other students and recognises its obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

### **Scope**

This policy and procedure will apply only to those students who were enrolled directly with the University of East London and who were either studying with attendance, or through a distance learning programme. Institutions enrolling students on University of East London programmes through a collaborative partnership will be expected to have their own local policy and procedure.

### **Policy**

The University is committed to supporting our students who are prospective parents by birth or adoption and those who have experienced pregnancy-related bereavement. We will be guided by the following principles when supporting our students:

- The University will work with our prospective parents in a supportive, non-judgmental and respectful manner;
- Once informed of a pregnancy or adoption, the University will work with the student concerned to ensure that reasonable adjustments are put in place in a timely manner in line with our duties under the Equality Act 2010;
- The University will always treat the health and safety of the student as paramount.
- The University will always treat information provided to us confidentially and will only pass on information to those staff members that need be informed in order to provide support or adjustments for the student concerned;
- The University will treat all prospective parents equally in accordance with our legislative duties. Students who are adopting a child will be offered the same level of support as those who have become biological parents;
- The University will be respectful and considerate to any student who requires adjustments to prepare for or assist recovery after a termination.

### **Paternity/partnership and adoption**

Once paternity/partnership or adoption can be evidenced the University will support paternity/partnership and adoption-related adjustments (e.g. to attend hospital appointments etc.) in the same way as for those who are pregnant.

In accordance with the entitlements that currently exist within employment law for paternity and adoption leave, UEL will support paternity and adoption related absence for a maximum of two consecutive weeks within 56 days of a child being born. The two weeks do not have to be taken consecutively but will need to be taken in week-long blocks. If both parents/partners or adoptive parents are UEL students then both are eligible to take leave.

### **Restriction on return to study for the student who has given birth**

You will not be allowed to attend University for two weeks after the birth of your child. This two week period of absence is in line with health and safety regulations, Employment Law and Department of Work and Pensions guidelines (April, 2014), and needs be planned for as part of the MPASP.

If you go beyond your expected due date, you will need to provide additional medical evidence to confirm that it is considered safe for you to continue to attend the University. This mandatory period of absence will be recorded separately from the usual attendance monitoring procedures of UEL. You should familiarise yourself with the Engagement and Attendance Policy which can be found on the following link:

<https://www.uel.ac.uk/discover/governance/policies-regulations-corporate-documents/student-policies>

### **International Students**

International students on a student visa should seek advice from the International Student Advice team (booked via the Hub) in relation to their pregnancy and the possible implications this may have on their visa particularly if a break in studies may be needed. A

break from UEL does not mean that the VISA will be automatically extended. You will need to seek Immigration Advice on this matter. It is important to have earlier discussions about this as an unexpected decision to fly abroad could impact health.

## **Accommodation**

Students who become pregnant whilst living in University accommodation will find that this is no longer suitable for health and safety reasons as UEL do not have family accommodation and Under 18s are not allowed in University accommodation during term time. Students who are pregnant or on maternity leave will be allowed to end their Halls of Residence contract early and will be supported by the Residential Life team to find appropriate off campus accommodation. Students who wish to remain in the Halls of Residence throughout their pregnancy will be supported by the Residential Life team who, if appropriate, will enable a move to a more appropriate room as required.

## **Procedure**

### **1. Student to inform School**

Once a pregnancy or adoption is confirmed the student should immediately inform their Programme Leader or Academic Advisor (Undergraduates) or Director of Studies/Dissertation supervisor (Postgraduates) so that appropriate adjustments can be considered through the development of the Maternity/Paternity and Adoption Support Plan (MPASP). If you would prefer to share your news to a School staff member who you feel more comfortable with then that is acceptable, but do remember that staff member will need to inform your Programme Leader or Academic Advisor (Undergraduates) or Director of Studies/Dissertation supervisor (Postgraduates).

The University cannot provide support if it is unaware and the ***duty rests with the student to inform*** the University of their pregnancy/adoption and the University can only put reasonable adjustments in place if we are informed. It is in your best interest to inform the University at the earliest opportunity so that we can put as much support in place as possible at the earliest stage of your pregnancy. The highest risk of damage to the baby is during the first 13 weeks of pregnancy. Consequently, students should notify us as early as possible of their pregnancy so that a support plan can be drawn up and a health and safety risk assessment can be conducted.

Remember being pregnant is not a valid reason for applying for extenuating circumstance. The development of the MPASP is the correct procedure to follow to ensure appropriate support and adjustments are in place for the student. Extenuation is only the appropriate process if unexpected complications arise.

### **2. Create a Maternity Paternity Adoption Support Plan (MPASP)**

Your School will arrange a support plan with you to identify any risks associated with your programme. The plan will also cover important information like study leave and return to study. It will help the University coordinate support for you throughout pregnancy, post birth and return to study.

To obtain a support plan you will need to arrange a meeting with your Programme Leader, Academic Advisor (if they have detailed knowledge of your course) or Dissertation Supervisor. They will ask you to provide the University with details of the pregnancy/adoption. In particular, we will require your expected date of delivery in order to properly ascertain your support needs.

As students are unlikely to have documentary evidence of their pregnancy before 20 weeks the MPASP can be drawn up prior to evidence being received. Evidence will be required though for the University to consider examination arrangements or alternative assessments but a risk assessment, advice on pregnancy related absence to attend appointments, and possible academic implications can be discussed and implemented prior to evidence being received.

The evidence a student may provide includes (but is not restricted to):

Pregnant students;

- Any letters indicating GP/Midwife, Antenatal or Hospital Appointments.
- A MATB1 Certificate (provided to a pregnant student after their 20-week scan).
- Any medical evidence indicating their expected date of delivery.
- Any reasonable proof of relationship for partners that are unmarried or in a civil partnership.

Adoptive parents;

- Proof of adoption can be provided through a birth certificate but UEL remains open to any reasonable proof of relationship for eligibility purposes.
- Evidence of any adoption-related dates that will affect attendance or ability to study.

### **3. What will the Maternity, Paternity and Adoption Support Plan cover?**

Your Programme Leader, Academic Advisor or Dissertation Supervisor will work with you to complete the Maternity/Paternity and Adoption Support Plan. Any recommendations will be dependent on your individual needs and will take account of the requirements of your course and the effect of your circumstances on your ability to undertake this. The Plan will set out your responsibilities and the responsibilities of staff and may include (but is not restricted to):

#### a) Health and Safety considerations

A risk assessment to ensure that any Health and Safety issues relating to your programme of study are identified and addressed. This is very important if your course includes physical activity or exposure to chemicals, radiation or biological agents, as these have been identified as high risk particularly within the first 13 weeks of pregnancy. This also includes any relevant risks associated with field work, laboratory work and placements. You may be asked to provide additional evidence from a responsible medical practitioner who confirms that there will be no risk to you or your unborn child from taking part in part in field work, laboratory work or a placement. You should also note that some professional bodies

prohibit people who are pregnant from undertaking placements and fieldwork. Your School will provide you with the information relevant to your course and will also be able to identify whether such work is a core competence and explore any alternative assessments as necessary.

Where placements form a compulsory part of a programme of studies the MPASP will be shared with the placement provider to ensure that a risk assessment assesses any special risks that may be presented in these environments to the pregnant student. Placement providers may also be asked to contribute to any temporary reasonable adjustments or additional control measures that may be required based on their knowledge of the workplace and local arrangements.

b) Absences

Agreeing and documenting all known Maternity/Paternity and Adoption related absences in advance. These absences can be considered against any course deadlines with a view to identifying whether it is possible for any missed work or assessments to be covered and how this could be done e.g. consideration of alternative methods of assessment

c) Exams and Assessments

Exploration of alternative arrangements where you are unable to complete any assessments due to pregnancy or maternity e.g. for those whose expected due date and the 2 weeks post-natal compulsory non-attendance period, conflict with submission or examination deadlines (competency standards allowing). Such recommendations will be subject to practicality and administrative deadlines.

If a student is due to give birth near to or during assessment deadlines or the examination period and wishes to complete their assessed work or sit their examinations, they should not be prevented from doing so.

Where a pregnant student is sitting exams, they should be referred to the Disability and Dyslexia Team to consider examination arrangements

d) Maternity-related absence

The MPASP should also consider the following:

- How much maternity-related absence the student intends to take
- When the student intends to start maternity-related absence
- When the student intends to return from maternity-related absence
- Consider whether the dates of maternity-related absence will affect the student's ability to complete any course module requirements. If so, what arrangements could be made to enable the student to complete the module?
- Consider what information the student will require during maternity-related absence to keep up to date on course developments and who will provide it
- Agree a proposed return to study plan with timetable.

e) Financial and funding advice and guidance

As a prospective parent, you may be eligible for additional funding or welfare benefits. You should contact the Student Money Advice and Rights Team (SMART), [smart@uel.ac.uk](mailto:smart@uel.ac.uk) who will be able to advise you. SMART will also be able to advise regarding any childcare benefits you may be entitled to once your child is born. This may help you plan for your return to study. If you are considering a break in study, it is essential that you see SMART so that they can help you to resolve any issues with your funding body (e.g. Student Finance England). This is very important if you wish to protect your funding or if you are considering moving from Full time to Part time status (or vice-versa) on your return to study as this may affect your student funding entitlements or benefits.

f) Intermitting studies (study break)

In certain instances, it may be necessary to consider intermitting. The MPASP should include notes of the discussion had when considering the possible impact on academic progression and any study break options. Please refer to the Student Initiated Intermission and Student Initiated Programme Withdrawal Policy available at <https://www.uel.ac.uk/discover/governance/policies-regulations-corporate-documents/student-policies>

g) Resuming studies after Maternity Leave

The student should inform their School when they are ready to return and plan with their Programme Leader or supervisor an appropriate timetable for their re-integration into the programme of study, including the examination schedule. The earlier the student can let their School know their return date the better.

**4. What if there is a change in your circumstances?**

You should contact your School so your MPASP can be updated;

- If there is a change in your circumstances that affect your ability to attend or study
- If you go beyond your expected due date and wish to continue to attend the University. Further medical evidence stating that you are well enough to attend may be required.
- If you make any decisions that affect your planned return to study
- If you require additional support because you have experienced a still birth or neo-natal death (you may prefer to make an appointment directly with the Student Wellbeing Team [wellbeing@uel.ac.uk](mailto:wellbeing@uel.ac.uk) ) but you should still advise your School so they are aware of your circumstances

If you experience any attendance difficulties relating to maternity, paternity or adoption, you should discuss these with your Academic Advisor/Programme Leader or Director of Studies/Dissertation Supervisor immediately.

## **5. Unexpected circumstances/Pregnancy Related Complications**

If you become ill, or develop a medical complication, during pregnancy or give birth unexpectedly early and, as a result are unable to complete or submit coursework or participate in examination(s), students are strongly advised to obtain medical evidence and apply for extenuation in the usual way.

Additionally, UEL will also give consideration to the impact of a termination, miscarriage, still birth or neonatal death on a student's ability to meet deadlines and sit examinations. Students will need to obtain medical evidence and apply for extenuation in the usual way.

Further information about UEL's Extenuating Circumstances Regulations can be found at <https://www.uel.ac.uk/discover/governance/policies-regulations-corporate-documents/student-policies/extenuation-procedures>

The MPASP is the method with which the University will support you during and after pregnancy. You should only apply for extenuating circumstances if there are complicating factors that have arisen which are not covered in the MPASP.

Students that have suffered a miscarriage, unexpected complications during pregnancy, still birth or neonatal death may need further emotional support and/or time off from study to recover after bereavement. Likewise, a student who has a termination of pregnancy, for whatever reason, may also need emotional support and/or time off from study. In all cases it is strongly advised to refer or signpost the student to the Student Wellbeing Team for such support.

The Students' Union has an Advice Service if students wish to receive independent advice and guidance. The Students' Union also has a parents and carers community group.

**Appendix 1 – Maternity, Paternity and Adoption Support Plan**
Student Details

Name	
Student Number	

Course Details

Course Title	
School	
Programme Leader/Supervisor	
Academic Advisor	

Emergency Contact Details for MPASP purposes

Name	
Relationship to Student	
Phone	

Key Dates (To be reviewed as appropriate during pregnancy)

What is the students expected due date?	
How many weeks pregnant was the student when UEL were informed of the pregnancy?	



<p>Has the student been informed that medical evidence (either letters/maternity notes/form MATB1) is required?</p> <p>Has evidence been provided?</p>	
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Pregnancy related absence

<p>What are the dates of antenatal or other medical appointments?</p>	
<p>What is the expected impact of these appointments on the student's studies?</p>	
<p>What measures can the student take to reduce the impact?</p>	
<p>What arrangements have been agreed to enable the student to catch up?</p>	

<p>Is the student unable to complete any assessments, or sit any examinations due to their expected due date?</p> <p>If yes, please provide details.</p>	
<p>What alternative arrangements have been agreed for any assessments or examinations for the student?</p>	

### Health and Safety

<p>Has the School conducted a risk assessment?</p> <p>Date of risk assessment</p>	
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### Students on placement

<p>Date the placement provider was notified of the pregnancy.</p> <p>Has the placement provider been provided with UEL's policy on supporting students during pregnancy?</p>	
<p>Will the student be able to complete the placement?</p> <p>If not, what alternative arrangements can be made?</p>	

<p>Has the placement provider completed a Risk Assessment?</p> <p>Date copy of placement provide risk assessment received by UEL.</p>	
<p>Name of the person responsible for liaising with the placement provider.</p>	

Examination arrangements

<p>Does the student need additional provision in examinations?</p> <p>If yes, please refer the student to the Disability and Dyslexia Team who can organise the exam arrangements.</p> <p>Detail additional provision once agreed</p>	
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International students/those on placements abroad

<p>Has the student contacted the International Students Advice Team for information on visa implications, airline restrictions etc?</p>	
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Financial support

<p>Has the student been advised to contact the Student Money Advice Team (SMART) for information on financial support and benefits?</p>	
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Intermission of studies / Extenuation

Has the student been advised on taking a study break and/or UEL's extenuation policy (extenuation is only applicable if there have been complications or a sudden, unexpected incident, e.g. miscarriage, premature birth, still birth or a medical condition caused by pregnancy which impacts on a student's ability to meet deadlines).	
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Maternity related absence (students should provide information at least 15 weeks before their due date)

How much maternity-related absence does the student intend to take?	
When does the student intend to start maternity-related absence?	
When does the student intend to return from maternity-related absence?	
Will the dates of maternity-related absence affect the student's ability to complete any course module requirements?	
If so, what arrangements have been made to enable the student to complete the module?	
What information will the student require during maternity-related absence to keep up to date on course developments?	

Who will be responsible for providing the information to the student?	
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Any other information or comments?

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**Plan to be reviewed on:**

Agree at least one review date with student. Remind student it is their responsibility to contact you if there are changes to their circumstances

	<b>Student</b>	<b>Staff</b>
<b>Name</b>		
<b>Signature</b>		
<b>Date</b>		

## Appendix 2 – Risk Assessment for Pregnant Students

### Hazards and Risks: How to avoid them!

Physical, biological and chemical agents, processes and working conditions which may affect the health and safety of pregnant students are set out below.

HAZARD, RISK	HOW TO AVOID THEM
<b>PHYSICAL AGENTS</b> Shocks, vibration or movement	Avoid work likely to involve uncomfortable whole-body vibration, particularly at low frequencies
Manual Handling of loads where there is a risk of injury	Changes should be made after a risk assessment depending on risks identified. This may entail avoiding manual handling, reducing the amount of physical work and/or providing aids for future work
Noise	The requirements of the Noise at Work Regulations are sufficient to meet the needs of pregnant students.
Ionising Radiation	The working conditions should be such that it is unlikely that anyone might receive a high accidental exposure.
Non-ionising Electromagnetic Radiation (NIEMR)	Pregnant or breastfeeding students are at no greater risk than other workers. Extreme over-exposure to radio frequency radiation could cause harm by raising body temperature.
Extremes of Cold or Heat	Pregnant workers should take great care when exposed to prolonged heat at work. Rest facilities and access to refreshment would help.
Movements and posture, mental and physical fatigue and other physical burdens connected with the activity of pregnant students	Ensure hours of work, volume of work and pacing of work are not excessive. Ensure seating is provided where appropriate. Be aware of spaces that may become awkward. Adjusting workstations or work procedures may help remove postural problems and risks of accidents. Adjusting workstations or work procedures may help remove postural problems and risks of accidents.
<b>BIOLOGICAL AGENTS</b> Any biological agent in hazard groups 2.3 and 4 (ACGM)	Risk Assessment must take account of the nature of biological agent and the control measures which exist.

HAZARD, RISK	HOW TO AVOID THEM
	Where it is known there is a high risk of exposure to a highly infectious agent, then it will be appropriate for the pregnant worker to avoid exposure altogether.
<p><b>CHEMICAL AGENTS</b> Substances labelled with the following risk phrases R40, R45, R46, R47, R61, R63, R64 and R68 under the CLP (Classification, Labelling and Packaging) Regulations (CE) 1272/2008</p>	<p>These substances all fall under the scope of COSHH. Employers are required to assess the health risks to workers and where appropriate prevent or control the risks.</p> <p>R40 – Limited evidence of a carcinogen effect  R45 – may cause cancer  R46 – may cause heritable genetic damage  R47 – may cause birth defects – no longer in use  R61 – may cause harm to the unborn child  R63 – Possible risk of harm to the unborn child  R64 – may cause harm to breastfed babies.  R68 – Possible risk of irreversible effects</p>
Mercury and Derivatives	Mercury and mercury derivatives are covered by the requirements of COSHH.
Chemicals agents of known and dangerous percutaneous absorption (i.e. that can be absorbed through the skin). This includes some pesticides.	<p>Take special precautions to prevent skin contact. Where possible use engineering methods to control exposure in preference to using personal protective equipment (PPE).</p> <p>The Control of Pesticides Regulations sets out general restrictions on the way that pesticides must be approved before they can be advertised, sold, supplied, used or stored.</p>
Carbon Monoxide	Pregnant people may have heightened susceptibility to the effects of exposure to carbon monoxide. HSE guidance note EH43 'Carbon Monoxide: health hazards and precautionary measures' gives practical advice on the risks
Lead and Lead derivatives	<p>The Approved Code of Practice: Control of Lead at Work, sets out current exposure limits to lead and the maximum permissible blood lead levels for workers who are exposed to lead and are subject to medical surveillance.</p> <p>A lower blood lead level is given for people of reproductive capacity. This is to protect the foetus from injury in the weeks before pregnancy is confirmed.</p>
<b>WORK WITH DISPLAY SCREEN EQUIPMENT (VDU's)</b>	<p>In the light of scientific evidence, pregnant people do not need to stop work with VDU's.</p> <p>To avoid problems caused by stress and anxiety people who are pregnant or planning children and are worried</p>

<b>HAZARD, RISK</b>	<b>HOW TO AVOID THEM</b>
	about working with VDU's should be given the opportunity to discuss their concern with their line manager.
<b>WORKING CONDITIONS</b> Inadequate rest facilities	Ensure access to adequate facilities including rest rooms.
Excessive working hours	Ensure hours of work are not excessive
Unusually stressful work	Conduct stress risk assessment and identify controls to reduce levels of stress
Exposure to cigarette smoke	Ensure access to adequate facilities to enable employee to work without exposure to cigarette smoke
Lone working	Identify and implement appropriate controls
Work at heights	Ensure risk assessments for work at heights ongoing
Travelling	Identify and implement appropriate controls
Exposure to violence	Identify and implement appropriate controls to prevent exposure to violence

#### **FACTORS TO BE CONSIDERED DURING THE RISK ASSESSMENT PROCESS**

The impact of aspects of pregnancy that may affect work are listed below. The impact will vary during the course of pregnancy and would therefore need to be kept under review.

<b>ASPECTS OF PREGNANCY</b>	<b>FACTORS IN WORK</b>
Morning Sickness	Early shift work Exposure to nauseating smells.
Backache	Standing/manual handling/posture
Varicose Veins	Standing/sitting
Haemorrhoids	Working in hot conditions
Frequent visits to toilet	Difficulties in leaving job/site of work
Increasing size	Use of protective clothing Work in confined areas Manual handling
Tiredness	Overtime Evening work Room temperature



Balance	Problems of working on wet/slippy surfaces
Comfort	Problems of working in tightly fitting uniforms
Dexterity, agility, co-ordination, speed of movement, reach may be impaired because of increasing size.	The individual may find some aspects of their role more difficult as their pregnancy progresses.

**Where these factors arise, appropriate controls should be determined in consultation with the member of staff and advice may be sought from the Health and Safety Unit (HSU) as necessary.**

	<b>Student</b>	<b>Staff</b>
<b>Name</b>		
<b>Signature</b>		
<b>Date</b>		

### **Appendix 3: Further Information for UEL Funded PhD Students**

Postgraduate Research Students who become pregnant, with an expected date of delivery that occurs during the period of the studentship, should consult their Dissertation Supervisor or Director of Studies.

UEL funded PhD students are entitled to a 6 month period of maternity leave during which funding can continue. After this 6 month period of paid maternity leave a student may have a suspension of the studentship for a further 6 months, during which no maintenance grant or tuition fees are payable. A UEL funded PhD student is therefore entitled to a total of 12 months leave of absence, of which 6 months are paid and up to 6 months are unpaid. The paid period of absence and the suspension can only be taken consecutively.

Periods of maternity leave, paternity leave or adoption leave will all be taken into account when calculating the date by which the University expects the student's thesis to be submitted. UEL funded PhD students who wish to take paternity leave or adoption leave are entitled to the same periods of leave entitlement as maternity leave.

## Appendix 4 Sources of Support and Advice

### University of East London

- Disability and Dyslexia Team - <https://www.uel.ac.uk/undergraduate/student-support/disability>
- Student Wellbeing Team - <https://uelac.sharepoint.com/StudentSupport/Pages/Health-And-Wellbeing.aspx>
- Student Money Advice and Rights Team (SMART) - <https://uelac.sharepoint.com/StudentSupport/Pages/Money-Advice-and-Rights.aspx>
- UEL International Student Advice Team - <http://www.uel.ac.uk/isa/>
- Children's Garden (UEL Nursery) - <http://www.uel.ac.uk/nursery/>
- UEL Students' Union - <http://www.uelunion.org/advice/>

### External information support or guidance:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| • Direct Gov                                     | • <a href="http://www.gov.uk">www.gov.uk</a>   |
| • Family Planning Association                    | • <a href="http://www.fpa.org.uk/">www.fpa.org.uk/</a>                                     |
| • Marie Stopes                                   | • <a href="http://www.mariestopes.org.uk/">www.mariestopes.org.uk/</a>                     |
| • British Pregnancy Advisory Service             | • <a href="http://www.bpas.org/bpaswoman">www.bpas.org/bpaswoman</a>                       |
| • Brook  | • <a href="http://www.brook.org.uk/">www.brook.org.uk/</a>                                 |
| • The Miscarriage Association                    | • <a href="http://www.miscarriageassociation.org.uk">www.miscarriageassociation.org.uk</a> |
| • Still Birth and Neonatal Death Charity (SANDS) | • <a href="http://www.uk-sands.org">www.uk-sands.org</a>                                   |

## **Appendix 5 MPASP Guidelines for staff**

Pregnancy and Maternity are protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 which protects expectant or new mothers from unfavourable treatment whether in education, at work or as a service user. At all times, staff must ensure that those students are not treated less favourably than any other student on the basis of their circumstances. Flexibility should be shown where possible to ensure continued learning is facilitated.

When a student discloses their pregnancy, a meeting should be arranged as soon as possible with the Academic Advisor/Programme Leader/ Supervisor (who understands the requirements of the student's programme of study) to complete the Maternity, Paternity and Adoption Support Form.

It is important to take the views and wishes of the student into account; their wishes should form the basis of the arrangement, rather than applying a standard set of arrangements. All decisions taken should be based on discussion with the student. Whilst an appropriate degree of flexibility should be exercised and efforts made to meet reasonable requests, staff should also seek to protect the academic integrity of the programme.

Students and staff should be encouraged to familiarise themselves with the Student Maternity, Paternity and Adoption Policy.

### **Estimated due date (EDD)**

Details are normally found on either the pregnancy notes given to the pregnant student by the anti-natal clinic or on the MAT B1 form which is provided around 26 weeks into pregnancy.

If the student does not have these because they have not yet been seen in the clinic, please continue with the plan and arrange for the relevant documentation to be emailed to the person completing the plan as soon as it received.

### **Medical Appointments**

As far as possible students should be encouraged to attend medical appointments outside of their UEL attendance days however it is recognised that this may not always be practicable.

The person completing this form should identify what impacts on attendance and studies and discuss with the student how this can be minimised.

### **Health & Safety Risk Assessment**

A Health & Safety risk assessment needs to be completed as soon as possible after the student discloses their pregnancy, if the circumstances of pregnancy change and if the student returns to studies within 26 weeks of giving birth (see appendix 5).

If the student is on placement during their pregnancy risk assessments needs to be completed by the placement provider.

### **Examinations**

If the student is sitting examinations and needs additional support arrangements, please refer them to the Disability and Dyslexia Team who can discuss adjustments with the student and liaise with the Assessment Unit to get the recommended support put in place

### **International Students**

International students must seek advice from the International Student Advisors regarding maternity related absence as this may affect their right to study and stay in the UK.

### **Financial and funding considerations**

All students should be advised to discuss the financial implications that pregnancy, maternity, paternity and adoption may have on their studies. Students should be advised to arrange an appointment with the Student Money Advice Team (SMART).

Any student given advice on deferral or intermittence should also be encouraged to contact the SMART Team as this also may have financial consequences.

### **Study break**

ECU guide: Student pregnancy and maternity: implications for higher education institutions states:

“All students should be allowed to take maternity-related absence following the birth of their child. How long a student will take will be determined by their personal circumstances and the structure and content of their course. HEIs should not automatically require students to interrupt for a year but should work with the student to establish a suitable return-to-study date.

Where course structure or content indicates the need for a student to return to study sooner than they would like to, the reason given will need to be justified in writing to the student. As students will be protected under the Equality Act 2010 from discrimination on the grounds of pregnancy and maternity, HEIs should also consider the need to justify their reasoning to a third party.

If an HEI is concerned about a student’s health in relation to their proposed return date or their course requirements, the student should be asked for their GP’s or health worker’s confirmation of their fitness to return to study.

At a minimum, students should be allowed to take one year out of study. Where there is concern about their knowledge of the field being affected by the length of time that they take, the student’s department should take steps to ensure the student is kept up to speed with developments in the field. For example, the student could be sent lists of key reading and new research, and dates and transcripts of departmental lectures, and steps can be taken to ensure they can access key journals.

In exceptional circumstances, students may need to extend the length of maternity leave that they take beyond the standard time allowed, for example in cases of postnatal depression, serious illness or loss of a baby, or where there is no available childcare.

HEIs should take steps to enable students to complete the requirements of their course or module before they take maternity-related absence. In some cases, the student may want to sit examinations or submit alternative forms of assessment during their maternity-related absence. Where a student is unable to complete their course or module before taking maternity-related absence, if possible, they should be allowed to complete the course or module on their return.”

### **Starting maternity-related absence**

Students should be allowed to decide when they start their maternity-related absence in agreement with their HEI. If students wish to, they should not be prevented from studying up to their due date, or from starting their maternity-related absence a full term or semester before their due date, where practicable.

Where a student is close to her due date and unable to study as planned, the HEI may, in consultation with the student, start her maternity-related absence earlier than planned or, if appropriate, explore alternative methods through which they can meet the course requirements.