



PREGNANCY, ADOPTION AND BECOMING A PARENT WHILE STUDYING – GUIDELINES

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Description	
<p>These Guidelines relate to students who might need support from the University or a Collaborative Partner because their study is affected by pregnancy, early parenthood, adoption, fostering or <i>in vitro</i> fertilisation (IVF) treatment.</p> <p>A summary of changes to this document appears on page 2.</p>	

SUMMARY OF CHANGES

This list summarises the changes since 2016/17. The date confirms when the changes were implemented.

22 May 2020	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. An addition to the risk assessment table in appendix 2, relating to using ionized radiation during the work process2. Removal of the reference to the student's ACT record (section 18)3. Revisions to the terminology throughout to make the document gender neutral
7 March 2018	<ol style="list-style-type: none">4. Intranet is not secure enough to hold the Pregnancy/Parenthood Support Plan so documents will be held in hard-copy instead5. Risk Assessment amended to make clear that staff are simply highlighting possible risks and are not responsible for the wellbeing of the student.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The University of Winchester believes that being or becoming pregnant, terminating a pregnancy or adopting a very young child should not, in itself, be a barrier to applying for, starting, succeeding in, or completing a programme of study at the University of Winchester or its Collaborative Partners. The University is committed to ensuring that there is an effective, flexible, supportive and sensitive system of supporting student pregnancy and parenthood, providing academic standards are upheld. The special arrangements which can and should be made for a student in these circumstances will vary from programme to programme. However, the general approach to be taken in these circumstances is consistent across the University. Advice on the application of these Guidelines in Collaborative Partners should be sought from the Quality Office.

To this end, these Guidelines are designed to:

- a) encourage early notification of pregnancy;
- b) clearly outline the responsibilities of the University, Faculties, individual staff members, students and applicants following notification;
- c) ensure that effective and flexible support is available to students throughout their pregnancy and the start and return of any period of maternity-related absence

While recognising a student's desire for confidentiality, especially in the early stages of a pregnancy, the University encourages students to be as frank as possible about their health and circumstances. This will help staff provide the best support and advice and devise and implement any special measures for the student's academic studies, where appropriate.

Terminology throughout these Guidelines and related documents is gender-neutral, since pregnancy and birth are not related to gender. However, where the terminology relates to statutorily related elements such as leave and pay, the terminology mirrors that of the statute (e.g. maternity-related pay) to avoid confusion.

2. SCOPE OF THESE GUIDELINES

These Guidelines apply to all undergraduate, taught postgraduate and postgraduate research students including those studying with a Collaborative Partner. These documents are also supported by two advice leaflets:

- a) Guidance for Students: 'Pregnancy, Adoption and Becoming a Parent Leaflet';
- b) Guidance for Staff: 'Supporting New and Expectant Birthing Parents or their Partners'

The Guidelines define the various issues that may need to be taken into account when considering the support for the student and their child, as appropriate. It also provides some information relating to supporting a student (whether female or male) who is expecting a child or has recently become a parent or is the partner of someone who is expecting a child or has a very young child.

3. ADVICE TO EXPECTANT BIRTHING PARENTS

A student is strongly advised to consult their GP to discuss medical issues relating to their pregnancy prior to informing the University. It is particularly important to take advice at an early stage if there is any possible health and safety risk.

Members of staff contacted by a student shall not attempt to influence their decision or assume that the pregnancy is unwanted or unplanned. Assumptions shall not be made about whether the student intends

to proceed with their pregnancy on the basis of their age, disability, gender identity, race, religion or belief, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, or stage of study or research.

Student Advisors in Student Services have details of individuals and organisations relating to pregnancy, parenthood and related issues that may be helpful.

4. WHY STUDENTS SHOULD INFORM THE UNIVERSITY OR COLLABORATIVE PARTNER

Please note that it is particularly important to inform University or Collaborative Partner at an early stage of a pregnancy where there is a potential risk to the health and safety of the student and/or their child (see below). If a University student would prefer to keep the details confidential, they should seek advice from one of the Student Advisors in Student Services in the first instance.

Students are not under any obligation to inform the University or Collaborative Partner if they become pregnant, have a child, or decide to terminate a pregnancy whilst they are a student. However, it is important to note that the University or Collaborative Partner will not be able to take a flexible approach to their programme, or provide specific support to the student, unless it knows about the situation. If requested, the University or Collaborative Partner will identify a member of staff of a requested gender to discuss such support needs.

In some cases the student may not wish to continue with their pregnancy, or they may suffer a miscarriage or have to terminate the pregnancy due to their health or the health of their baby. Consequently, information concerning a student's pregnancy shall be treated sensitively and shall be passed on only with the student's consent. When and who is responsible for informing staff and/or fellow students about the pregnancy shall be agreed in writing with the student.

Whilst making a decision on whether or not to inform their University or Collaborative Partner, students are encouraged to consider the following:

- a) There may be elements of their programme that could present a health and safety risk to a pregnant student and/or their child and the University or Collaborative Partner will not be able to arrange an appropriate risk assessment unless it is aware of their pregnancy;
- b) If a student's pregnancy-related absence (eg for antenatal appointments) impacts significantly on the student's studies, the University or Collaborative Partner will not be able to take proper account of the reasons for absence unless it is aware of their pregnancy;
- c) In some cases, a student's pregnancy-related absence from University might be something that needs to be discussed with other organisations, eg a separate risk assessment may be required for a placement or study abroad provider or the terms and conditions set by a funding body or sponsor may require them to be informed;
- d) Sometimes, the absence of a student can adversely affect the work of other students they are working alongside (eg on a group project or in a research team), which might make it more important to notify the University or Collaborative Partner, so that plans can be made to deal with any such issues arising from the absence;
- e) Payment of tuition or accommodation fees, arrangements for financial support, loans, studentships or similar and accommodation or housing contracts may need to be renegotiated.

Some students may wish to keep their personal circumstances private. In these cases, the University or Collaborative Partner will agree with the student exactly who needs to know what in order to provide adequate support without the details becoming public knowledge.

NB International Students: If an international student requires a Visa to remain in the UK during their period of study and their pregnancy is likely to result in the need to remain in the UK longer than planned, or if an international student is considering a temporary interruption to their studies, then immigration advice should be sought from the International Student Officer in Student Services (see also *Section 11 - Students Holding Student Visas for Studying in the UK*).

5. WHO STUDENTS SHOULD INFORM AT THE UNIVERSITY OR COLLABORATIVE PARTNER

In order to ensure the best support for students, the University recommends that students liaise with an academic member of staff, who will act as an Academic Support Contact (ASC) and a Parenthood Liaison Contact (PLC) nominated by a Student Advisor from the Student Services¹. These two members of staff shall work with the student to arrange a Pregnancy/Parenthood Support Plan to support the student academically and pastorally throughout the pregnancy or an IVF treatment programme and, where appropriate, during the first six months of parenthood.

Taught Students

The most appropriate person to discuss academic support plans for a pregnancy or an IVF treatment programme is the Programme Leader but students have the right to request a meeting with another trusted member of staff or may request the University or Collaborative Partner to identify a female member of staff.²

The student should contact a Student Advisor from the Student Services to request a Parenthood Liaison Contact. (Please note that Student Advisors are part-time and normally only work during semester and assessment periods.)

Research Students (working on their Thesis)

The most appropriate person to discuss academic support plans for a pregnancy or an IVF treatment programme is their Director of Studies but students have the right to request a meeting with another trusted member of staff or may request the RKE Office to identify a female member of staff.

The student should contact a Student Advisor from the Student Services to request a Parenthood Liaison Contact. (Please note that Student Advisors are part-time and normally only work during semester and assessment periods.)

Students studying at a Collaborative Partner

Students studying at Collaborative Partners should contact their Programme Leader, who shall normally provide both academic and pastoral support and advice but students have the right to request a meeting with another trusted member of staff or may request the RKE Office to identify a female member of staff. Alternatively, the Partner may have nominated a specific member of staff to provide academic and/or pastoral support. In these cases, the name of the member of staff nominated shall be publicised to the students via the Programme Handbook.

6. ARRANGING A PREGNANCY/PARENTHOOD SUPPORT PLAN

Once the student has informed staff, the student and the Academic Support Contact and Parenthood Liaison Contact shall meet to discuss and agree a plan for continuation of study. Whenever possible, this meeting shall normally be held within 10 working days (during teaching and assessment periods) of the University or Collaborative Partner being informed. During vacation periods, this meeting may take longer to arrange and the student may need to be flexible about who is involved in the initial discussions if staff are unavailable.

¹ Details of the Student Advisors can be found on the Student Services' Intranet page for [Student Advice](#)

² Combined Honours students are advised to consult with the Programme Leaders for both subjects to determine whether they require an Academic Support Contact in both subjects or whether one Academic Support Contact could be assigned from one subject but take responsibility for providing academic support and advice on behalf of both subjects.

The Academic Support Contact shall ensure that a Risk Assessment is undertaken to ensure the safety of the birthing parent and their baby, as early as possible and normally within 10 working days of notification of pregnancy to the University or Collaborative Partner, because the highest risk of damage to a baby is during the first 13 weeks of pregnancy. See *Section 7 Health & Safety* below.

The Parenthood Liaison Contact and Academic Support Contact and student shall be jointly responsible for ensuring that the student is informed about:

- a) implications for programme completion (eg making alternative or special arrangements for assessments, catching up on missed seminars and lectures, placements, to enable attendance at healthcare appointments);
- b) arranging maternity-related absence;
- c) arranging return to study following maternity-related absence;
- d) financial implications and entitlements, including student loans, benefits and maternity pay, if any;
- e) childcare facilities on campus or in the local community.

As part of this, the Parenthood Liaison Contact, Academic Support Contact and student shall be jointly responsible for drafting a Pregnancy/Parenthood Support Plan, which shall be reviewed at regular, defined points as some decisions cannot be made at the start of the student's pregnancy.

The Pregnancy/Parenthood Support Plan shall be informed by the Risk Assessment and cover:

- a) communication about the student's pregnancy, as appropriate
- b) communication with the student during pregnancy
- c) health and safety
- d) antenatal care
- e) exams and assessments
- f) placements and fieldwork
- g) study abroad
- h) maternity-related absence
- i) communication with the student during maternity-related absence³
- j) possible variation to the mode of study when the student returns to study
- k) transitional arrangements at the point of return
- l) continued support during the first six months of parenthood

The Plan shall normally be reviewed at key stages to be agreed between the student, their Parenthood Liaison Contact and Academic Support Contact. Times to be considered in particular are:

- m) between 20 and 22 weeks of the pregnancy
- n) between 30 and 32 weeks of the pregnancy
- o) between 4 – 6 weeks before the end of the student's planned return from a maternity-related absence

See *Appendix 1* for a template *Pregnancy/Parenthood Support Plan*.

Once agreed, the Plan shall be copied and shared with the student, Academic Support Contact, the Parenthood Liaison Contact. The copy held by the Parenthood Liaison Contact shall be held in a secure

³ Email contact for Winchester students shall be done via the Winchester Unimail and email accounts, in accordance with University Regulations and procedures.

place where it can be shared with other members of the Student Advice Team⁴. (It may also be made available to other members of staff but only with the express written⁵ permission of the student.)

Students who are unhappy with the arrangements proposed or implemented for the Pregnancy/Parenthood Support Plan shall discuss these with their Academic Support Contact and Parenthood Liaison Contact in the first instance. If they remain dissatisfied, they may lodge a complaint in accordance with the University's *Complaints Policy*.

7. HEALTH & SAFETY

Pregnancy should not be equated with poor health. However, there are health and safety considerations that arise during pregnancy and breastfeeding/chestfeeding, and the risks to which students could be exposed need to be assessed as early as possible in the pregnancy since the highest risk of damage to a baby is during the first 13 weeks of pregnancy.

The level of risk to which a student is exposed will depend on the requirements and nature of their programme. For most University programmes the risks will be very low. See Appendix 2 for a *Risk Assessment Form for New and Expectant Birthing Parents*.

The Academic Support Contact shall arrange for a Risk Assessment to be conducted normally within 10 working days of notification of pregnancy to the University or Collaborative Partner. The Risk Assessment shall consider the student's involvement in:

- a) teaching & learning sessions;
- b) assessments;
- c) fieldwork activities;
- d) planned excursions off campus;
- e) placements*;
- f) study abroad*.

* *If the student is undertaking work as a volunteer or as part of a placement that contributes to their degree programme, then the University will liaise with the employer/placement provider to ensure they conduct their own Risk Assessment.*

Where risks are identified during a health and safety assessment, the student and, if necessary, their midwife or medical advisor may be consulted on ways to alleviate or minimise the identified risk. Likewise, if their midwife or medical advisor advises the student of any additional risk factors for the birthing parent and/or the baby, the student is strongly advised to share these with their Academic Support Contact, Parenthood Liaison Contact and Health & Safety Manager, as appropriate, to ensure that additional support may be put in place, where relevant.

For staff seeking advice when completing the Risk Assessment Form, please refer to the:

[**Health & Safety Executive Guidance for New and expectant mothers**](#)

⁴ As members of the Student Advice Team only work part-time and may not always be available at short notice, it is advisable that all have access to ensure appropriate cover is available in case of an emergency.

⁵ May be in the form of an email

8. MATERNITY-RELATED ABSENCE

Students' entitlements to maternity leave and pay are outlined in *Section 9 Financial Matters* below. However, very few students are entitled to such leave and pay as these are entitlements that only exist under employment law. For this reason, this guidance refers primarily to maternity-related absence, but it draws upon employment law to assist the University to provide consistent student support. Language in relation to this will also mirror the gendered language of employment law and statute in order to avoid confusion.

Arrangements for maternity-related absence apply equally to live births and still births after 24 weeks as well as in cases of neo-natal death.

At least 15 weeks before their expected due date for giving birth, the student shall be asked to confirm the date on which they intend to start maternity-related absence and the length of maternity-related absence that they intend to take and the date on which they intend to return and this shall be included in the Pregnancy/Parenthood Support Plan. This is in line with employment law and will allow sufficient time for University or Collaborative Partner to liaise with the student, review the student support plan, make any necessary arrangements, and ensure information is communicated to others, as required.

Length and timing of maternity-related absence

All students are permitted to take maternity-related absence following the birth of their child. How long a student will take shall be determined by their personal circumstances, the structure and content of their programme and, where appropriate any Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body requirements. The Parenthood Liaison Contact and Academic Support Contact shall work with the student to establish a suitable return-to-study date. Where possible, the University or Collaborative Partner shall give preference to the student's wishes.

Where programme structure or content changes significantly, the student will be advised of the changes and possible alternative routes to complete their studies following their return. For example, the programme may be closing down.

Where the programme structure or content indicates the need for a student to interrupt their studies for longer than they would like, the reason given shall be justified in writing to the student. For example, the programme may have strict attendance requirements.

The University shall, wherever possible, take steps to enable students to complete the programme requirements of the current academic year or semester before they start maternity-related absence. This may include setting alternative forms of assessment either before or during their maternity-related absence. Where it is not possible to arrange the above before the start of the student's maternity-related absence, the University shall arrange for their to complete the outstanding work as soon as possible after their return to studies.

If the Pregnancy/Parenthood Support Plan states that the students shall complete their expected workload for that year of study, then the student shall remain registered as 'in attendance' for the purposes of statistical data returns and shall remain liable for fees. This includes students who are permitted leave of absence for 3 weeks or less.

If, however, the maternity-related absence shall be longer than 3 weeks, it is possible that the student will be required to 'Interrupt' their studies such that they need to defer completion or part of all their expected academic load for a defined period up to a maximum of one calendar year.

A student may request a maternity-related absence of any length within the following limits:

Minimum period of absence: 2 weeks compulsory maternity-related absence⁶

This is in accordance with the recommendation of the Equality Challenge Unit (ECU) and employment law, and is to ensure the health and safety of the mother following birth. The University shall not, therefore, permit students to reduce the minimum period below 2 weeks.

Calculating the return date: two weeks compulsory maternity leave starts from the date the baby is born, so if the baby arrives on a Tuesday, the two weeks would end on the Monday two weeks later.

Students are not permitted to engage with any teaching or learning sessions during this period.

Maximum period of absence: Normally one calendar year

This is in accordance with the University's Academic Regulations relating to period of interruption.

(However, this period may be further extended to a second calendar year. Please refer to the *Academic Regulations for Taught Programmes or Postgraduate Research Programmes*, as appropriate.)

Every pregnancy is unique and there may be any number of reasons affecting a student's choice of the length of their break and when to start and finish it. Logistically, it may be easier for a student to coincide their maternity absence with an entire semester or defined period of study but there is no requirement for them to do so. For example, some students may already be mothers and feel confident about their ability to take a very short break, where other students may prefer to take more time out to ensure that they are able to make the necessary adjustments to their home and personal life with a new baby before returning to study.

Renegotiating the length of a maternity-related absence

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

Where students have agreed the period of absence but subsequently find that they need to extend the length of maternity-related absence after the maternity-related absence has started they should contact their Academic Support Contact and Parenthood Liaison Contact to renegotiate their return date. (For example, in the case of an unplanned caesarean section, postnatal depression, serious illness or loss of a baby or where there is no available childcare.) Student should do this as soon as possible to help ensure appropriate support can be arranged quickly and effectively. (For example, where there is concern about the student's knowledge of the subject being affected by the length of the maternity-related absence, the Academic Support Contact shall arrange appropriate support to ensure they are kept up to speed with developments in the subject. This could include lists of key reading and new research, dates and transcripts of departmental lectures and access to the University's IT facilities including Library online resources being made available.)

The Parenthood Liaison Contact and Academic Support Contact shall then review the Pregnancy/Parenthood Support Plan in light of any changes and, where appropriate, agree revised dates with the student in writing⁷.

In some cases, the University may require the student to ask their medical advisor or health worker to confirm that they are fit to return to study. (Please refer to the University's *Fitness to Study Policy* for details.)

⁶ NHS Student Bursaries recommend a minimum of 12 weeks' maternity absence, but allow students to return earlier if they have approval from their GP or health worker.

⁷ May be done via email.

9. FINANCIAL MATTERS

Maternity leave and maternity pay

If a student is employed or has recently left employment, they may be entitled to statutory maternity pay, additional maternity pay or a maternity allowance. Further information can be found at www.direct.gov.uk.

Language in relation to financial matters will mirror the gendered language of employment law and statute in order to avoid confusion.

University of Winchester studentships

Students in receipt of a stipend paid through a studentship awarded by the University of Winchester may be entitled to maternity leave. Universities can continue stipend payments when a student takes maternity leave. However, if students do not return to their studentship after taking maternity leave, they may have to pay back the stipend payments received during their maternity leave.

Research council-funded postgraduate students

Research council-funded students are entitled to maternity leave and pay. From 1 April 2010, all research councils introduced harmonised maternity leave and pay entitlements for students funded from training grants. Students funded from training grants are entitled to take six months' maternity leave on full stipend and a further six months' unpaid maternity leave. For further information see research council terms and conditions of funding: <http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/funding/grantstcs>

Sources of financial support for students during pregnancy and post-birth

This section focuses on sources of support for UK home students. EU and international students are advised to contact their home government and sponsor for information on pregnancy and post-birth entitlements.

Regulations on student financial support in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland contain provisions for discretion when determining if all or part of a student's **grant or loan** is payable when a student is absent from their course for reasons other than illness. When deciding whether it would be appropriate to pay all or part of the grant or loan, consideration is given to:

- a) the reasons for the student's absence;
- b) the length of the absence; and
- c) the financial hardship caused by not paying all or part of the loan or grant.

Students should contact the Students and Money team (Student Services) for guidance about continuing payments through Student Finance.

Students may be eligible to apply for the University's Student Support Fund. The Fund may be able to support eligible students where they are absent from their course for reasons other than illness and would be unable to return to their course due to financial hardship. However, the funds are increasingly being relied upon, and are limited.

Some students may be entitled to government welfare benefits and grants and students should discuss this with their midwife or GP in the first instance. However, students should also note that the interaction between Student Finance and benefits is complex and students ought to seek tailored advice from their local benefits office.

10. STUDY ABROAD OR PLACEMENTS HELD OFFSITE

Travel

Unless they are advised not to do so by their doctor or midwife, students should be able to travel during pregnancy. However, there are some considerations:

- a) Airlines have different policies and may not allow travel beyond 36 weeks or, in the event that the pregnancy is complicated or multiple, beyond 32 weeks. Students will need to check individual airline policies before travelling, and be aware that airlines will ask students for proof that it is safe for them to travel.
- b) UK students who are on placement or studying abroad will need to check their visa terms and conditions as they may need to extend their stay or return to the country at a later date.
- c) As pregnancy may be considered a pre-existing condition by insurance companies, students who discover or know they are pregnant, prior to commencing a field trip or their placement or study abroad, will need to check whether their insurance covers them for pre-existing conditions.

The University's Travel Cover specifically excludes:

*'any expenses incurred in respect of Bodily Injury or Sickness which arises directly or indirectly from or in connection with or is aggravated by:
pregnancy or childbirth within 1 month of the expected delivery date'*

11. STUDENTS HOLDING STUDENT VISAS FOR STUDYING IN THE UK

If an international student becomes pregnant during their studies, they will be likely to require a longer stay in the UK. However, at present students who require a visa to study in the UK cannot extend their visa for reasons relating to pregnancy or post-birth. All visas allow for a short period of stay in the UK in addition to the time spent on a course. At the time of writing this guidance, the period allowed was as follows:

- a) students on main and pre-sessional courses lasting 12 months or longer can remain in the UK for the length of their programme plus four months
- b) students on main and pre-sessional courses lasting more than six months but less than 12 months can remain in the UK for the length of their programme plus two months
- c) students on main and pre-sessional courses lasting six months or less can remain for the length of the programme plus seven days
- d) postgraduate doctors and dentists on a recognised foundation programme can stay a maximum of three years and one month

The additional time allowed may not be sufficient for some students to take post-birth-related absence. Consequently, any international student who becomes pregnant while registered for a programme at the University shall consult the International Student Officer in Student Services.

Further information on student visas can be found on the Home Office website:

www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/studyingintheuk/student-visitors.

Liaison with study abroad or placement provider

If a student is studying abroad or on a placement abroad during their pregnancy or maternity, the University shall liaise with the host institution or placement provider to ensure, where possible, that their needs are met. Where the support available from the host institution or placement provider does not meet the standards set by these Guidelines, the University shall discuss the implications with the student to determine whether the student would prefer to defer or withdraw from that aspect of the programme, as appropriate.

12. NON- ACADEMIC SUPPORT

Student accommodation

Students shall not be asked to leave their existing University accommodation because they are pregnant. However, some University accommodation may be unsuitable for children, or may, in some circumstances, be difficult for pregnant people in the later stages of pregnancy to access. If a student wishes to discuss such issues, they should approach the Housing Office in the first instance.

Pregnant students who would like help to find suitable accommodation, either on or off-campus, prior to the arrival of their baby or prior to their return from maternity-related absence, should notify the Housing Office as soon as possible. The University has a small number of flats suitable for family accommodation, but there is generally a waiting list for these. For more information, students should contact Housing Office, who can also provide advice to students about finding non-University owned family accommodation.

Where a student decides to interrupt their study and needs to end their contract for University housing early because of pregnancy or maternity, this shall normally be approved, subject to the normal procedures. Where a student is in private accommodation, the Housing Office is available to provide support and advice on their rights and obligations.

Childcare

Students are advised to be making arrangements at the beginning of your pregnancy and no later than the end of the first trimester as this affects the decisions about when and how they return to their studies after the birth.

West Downs Day Nursery run by Child Base Ltd at the West Downs campus will take children from the age of 6 weeks. There are term-time only subsidised places for the children of students studying at the University but these places are limited and there is usually a waiting list.

A website address is provided below for other sources of child care.

<http://www3.hants.gov.uk/familyinformationdirectory>

Breast feeding

Those who breastfeed/chestfeed in public places are explicitly protected.

However, please note that students are not normally permitted to bring their babies to teaching and learning sessions. For details of the circumstances in which children may be brought on campus please refer to *Appendix 1* of the *Safeguarding Policy: Code of Practice: Health and Safety of Children and Young Persons on The University of Winchester Premises*.

13. NEW PARENTS AND PARENTAL-RELATED ABSENCE

Supporting Partners of Pregnant Students

The University is committed to supporting students, whose partners become pregnant or whose partner is undergoing IVF treatment. The student, whose partner is pregnant or undergoing IVF treatment, is not required to inform the University. However, if the partner has any complications or a serious pregnancy-related illness, the student is strongly advised to inform a Student Advisor in Student Services.

In most cases, support can be arranged via the *Extenuating Circumstances Policy*.

If a University student would prefer to keep the details confidential, they may authorise the Student Advisor to communicate with others, on their behalf. This can include providing support for requests for extenuating circumstances to be taken into account, while keeping the reasons confidential.

For the purposes of this policy 'a partner' is defined as a spouse, civil partner or someone (of either sex or who is non-cisgender and including transgendered individuals) with whom you live in an enduring family relationship, but who is not your parent, grandparent, sister, brother, aunt or uncle.

Time off for antenatal or IVF appointments and in cases of pregnancy-related illness

A student may want to attend their partner's antenatal or IVF appointments or need to take time off if their partner has complications with their pregnancy or a serious pregnancy-related illness. If this impacts on programme-specific attendance rules or submission dates for coursework or attendance at exams, practical assessment or vivas, the student should submit a Self-Certification Form and/or Extenuating Circumstances Form in accordance with the *Extenuating Circumstances Policy*, providing evidence as appropriate.

Notification of paternal-related absence

If a student wants to take paternal-related absence, they shall inform their Programme Leader and their Paternity Support Contact, where appropriate, at least 15 weeks before the baby is due to ensure appropriate support can be put in place in good time. Requests for paternal-related absence shall be considered if submitted later and every attempt made to accommodate the request but this may present challenges and some flexibility may be required on the part of the student.

Length of paternal-related absence

The University allows students, who are fathers or partners of new-borns to request two weeks paternal-related absence within the first 56 days of their child's life plus up to six months' additional statutory paternity leave in the second six months of their child's life as long as the birthing parent has returned to work. (This is in accordance with the amendment to the Work and Families Act 2006, which came into force on 6 April 2011).

Student may request paternal-related absence via the Interrupting Study Form, in accordance with the *Academic Regulations for Taught Programmes or Postgraduate Research Programmes*, as appropriate.

Support during, and on return from, paternal-related absence

If the student request two weeks paternal-related absence within the first 56 days of their child's life, the Programme Leader shall be responsible for requesting Module Tutors to provide the student with materials from any learning & teaching sessions that shall be missed.

Paternity pay

If a student is working and is considered by the UK government to be in employment, they may be entitled to paternity leave pay from their employer. If a student has a stipend, NHS bursary or research council funding, they may be entitled to paid paternity leave. Students should familiarise themselves with the terms and conditions of their award.

14. IVF TREATMENT

Students undergoing IVF treatment are also strongly advised to consult their medical advisor to discuss whether the University should be informed in order that an H & S Risk Assessment may be undertaken to identify any risk factors that might affect the outcome of the treatment or, where treatment is successful, the health of the pregnant person and their baby. See Section 7 above.

A student who is undergoing *in vitro* fertilisation (IVF) treatment, or whose partner is undergoing treatment, may need additional support due to:

- the impact of medical treatment
- other caring responsibilities
- related medical appointments

In most cases, such support can be arranged via the Extenuating Circumstances Policy.

If the student would prefer to keep the details confidential, they should contact a Student Advisor to arrange support for requests for extenuating circumstances to be taken into account, while keeping the reasons confidential.

Members of staff contacted by a student shall not attempt to influence a student's decision regarding IVF treatment.

15. ADOPTION, SURROGACY AND FOSTERING

Students who have been matched for adoption, or fostering or who are entering into a surrogacy arrangement in which a Parental Order will be sought, shall inform the Student Advice staff in Student Services in the first instance.

If the student is the primary adopter, a support plan shall be developed in line with the guidance above for a Pregnancy/Parenthood Support Plan.

If the student's partner is the primary adopter or fosterer, the student shall be allowed time off from studies in line with the advice in the Section 13 above on New Parents and Paternal-related absence.

If a student has a stipend, NHS bursary or research council funding, they are likely to be allowed a period of paid adoption leave. Students should be advised to familiarise themselves with the terms and conditions of their award.

16. MISCARRIAGE, STILL BIRTHS AND NEONATAL DEATH

Students, who experience a miscarriage, still birth or if their baby dies shortly after it is born, are very strongly advised to inform their Parenthood Liaison Contact, or if they had not already informed the University of their pregnancy, are very welcome to contact a Student Adviser in Student Services for support or a member of staff whom they trust. This person shall take responsibility for ensuring other staff, who may have been aware of the pregnancy beforehand, are informed so that the student is not distressed by subsequent queries about their pregnancy.

This person shall also encourage the student to stay in close contact so that they can liaise with staff to provide any necessary support, as appropriate. In particular, the Parenthood Liaison Contact will liaise with the Academic Support Contact to update the Pregnancy/Parenthood Support Plan.

If the student does not directly inform the University of their situation, but the Parenthood Liaison Contact becomes aware of the event, they may approach the student directly out of concern for their health and remind them that support may be available should they wish to seek it.

Students may need time off from study for tests before as well as time off to recover after the event. If the time off is not already covered by a Pregnancy/Parenthood Support Plan, the student should apply for an extension/deferral or leave of absence in accordance with the *Extenuating Circumstances Policy*. If the student would prefer to keep the reason for their request confidential, they should request support from one of the Student Advisers in Student Services as outlined in the *Extenuating Circumstances Policy*.

Additional support:

The Miscarriage Association offers support and information to anyone affected by the loss of a baby in pregnancy. Website link: [Miscarriage Association](http://www.miscarriageassociation.org.uk)

The stillbirth and neonatal death charity SANDS publishes a number of free booklets that can be ordered at www.uk-sands.org/Publications/Support-and-information-leaflets.html

17. TERMINATION OF PREGNANCY

A student may decide to terminate their pregnancy. Students considering this shall normally be offered counselling by the NHS or a private specialist clinic.

Students may need time off from study for tests before as well as time off to recover after the event. In these cases they should apply for an extension/deferral or leave of absence in accordance with the *Extenuating Circumstances Policy*. If the student would prefer to keep the reason for their request confidential, they should request support from one of the Student Advisers in Student Services as outlined in the *Extenuating Circumstances Policy*.

Students are welcome to seek confidential support and advice from Student Services.

Members of staff contacted by a student shall not attempt to influence a student's decision.

Additional support:

The charity Antenatal Results and Choices (www.arc-uk.org) provides specific support to students who receive difficult news in relation to antenatal test results.

18. RETAINING RECORDS FOLLOWING THE CONCLUSION OF SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS

Following the conclusion of the support provided to students under the terms of these Guidelines, records shall be retained for the current academic year plus a further 3 years. At the end of this period, the records shall be deleted from electronic storage and any hard copies shall be disposed of as confidential waste.

As a minimum, the records shall include the Support Plan, all Risk Assessments undertaken and any supporting paperwork or electronic communications. In the case of students who request that no support is provided, a copy of this request shall be retained instead.

Student Services shall be responsible for retaining these documents. For Collaborative Partners, the documents shall normally be retained either by the Programme Leader or the member of staff responsible for pastoral care or equivalent.

19. APPENDIX 1 PREGNANCY/PARENTHOOD SUPPORT PLAN

A Word version of this Plan can be downloaded from the Intranet Document Store: [Policies, Guidelines and Regulations page](#)

The Parenthood Liaison Contact (PLC), Academic Support Contact (ASC) and student shall be jointly responsible for drafting a Pregnancy/Parenthood Support Plan, which shall be reviewed at defined points as some decisions cannot be made at the start of the student's pregnancy.

This should remain a live document during the student's pregnancy and early stages of maternity. All changes to be agreed by the three main parties.⁸ This may be shared with other parties but only with the express, written permission of the student.

If arrangements for a face to face meeting are delayed for any reason, the ASC shall make a start on the Plan and email it to the others for their comments.

The Plan may be supplemented by other documentation, as appropriate.

Once the initial draft has been agreed it should be 'signed' and dated. Subsequent changes or confirmation that an actioned has been completed should be added with a note of the date.

Please complete this form electronically and the boxes will then expand to fit the text entered.

Personal Details	
Name of student	
Student Number	
Programme	
Year of study	
Expected Completion Date for Award (mmm/yyyy)	
Parenthood Liaison Contact	
Academic Support Contact	
Academic Support Contact (2 nd subject for CHP) if appropriate. May be included purely as point of contact for ASC for 1 st subject	
Who will need to be informed about the student's pregnancy/adoption and when would the student like them to be informed?	

⁸ As members of the Student Advice Team only work part-time, the Parenthood Liaison Contact may not always be available at short notice all Student Advisors shall have access to the Plan to ensure appropriate cover is available in case of an emergency.

Personal Details	
<p>Apart from those who need to know, is the Pregnancy /Adoption to remain Confidential? <i>If Yes, the person responsible for informing those who need to know (see above) must stress the need for confidentiality.</i></p>	Yes / No (delete as appropriate)
<p>Email communication via Unimail List additional communication channels here <i>(indicate which channel to be used during pregnancy, maternity-related absence, return to study, as appropriate)</i></p>	
<p>Emergency contact in case student taken ill on campus <i>(name, relationship to student, 1 or preferably 2 contact numbers)</i></p>	
Additional Comments	

Ensuring student is informed of support	
Has student been informed of the following?	<i>(delete as appropriate; add notes where relevant)</i>
f) the student is responsible for informing their Academic Support Contact and Parenthood Liaison Contact of any changes;	Yes / No
g) implications for programme completion (eg making alternative or special arrangements for assessments, catching up on missed seminars and lectures, placements, to enable attendance at healthcare appointments)	Yes / No / Not applicable
h) arranging maternity-related absence;	Yes / No / Not applicable
i) arranging return to study following maternity-related absence;	Yes / No / Not applicable
j) financial implications and entitlements, including student loans, benefits and maternity pay, if any;	Yes / No / Not applicable
k) childcare facilities on campus or in the local community	Yes / No / Not applicable
Additional Comments	

Key Dates and Actions	
Date Pregnancy /New Parenthood Notified to University	
Expected Due Date / Placement of adopted child	
Expected start of Maternity-related Absence	
Expected end of Maternity-related Absence	
Review date 1 ⁹	
Review date 2 (as appropriate)	
Review date 3(as appropriate)	
Is a period of Interruption required? If Yes, give details below	Yes / No If Yes, students must ensure that financial implications have been identified and confirmed with University/funding bodies, as appropriate. Interruption Study Form, available from Registry, must also be completed and submitted.
Additional Comments	

Risk Assessment <i>Ensure actions listed are incorporated into this Plan and Post up Risk Assessment with Plan on the Learning Network</i>	Must normally be undertaken within 15 days of Pregnancy notified to University
Date undertaken	
Is a separate Risk Assessment required for Placement, study abroad or other	Yes / No
Date undertaken	
Additional Comments	

⁹ Review times shall be set by the 3 signatories but it is recommended that the following timings be considered: 20 – 22 weeks of pregnancy, 30 – 32 weeks of pregnancy and 4 – 6 weeks before end of planned returned from Maternity-related Absence.

Action proposed / agreed
Additional pages may be added to provide more details of the actions listed below.
Arrangements for Antenatal visits
Arrangements for Exam(s) and Assessment(s) Affected, if any
Arrangements for Placement/Fieldwork/Study abroad Affected (delete as appropriate) if any
Arrangements for assessments/modules deferred prior to the start of Maternity-related Absence, if any
Arrangements for change of mode of study on return to study, if any (eg moving from FT to PT)
Reviewing accommodation arrangements during pregnancy and/or following maternity related absence
Arrangements for additional support during first six months of maternity, if any
Other arrangements, as appropriate

Signed	Electronic signature
Student	
Parenthood Liaison Contact	
Academic Support Contact	
Academic Support Contact 2 (for 2 nd subject) if appropriate	

20. APPENDIX 2 RISK ASSESSMENT FORM FOR NEW AND EXPECTANT BIRTHING PARENTS

A Word version of this Plan can be downloaded from the Intranet Document Store: [Policies, Guidelines and Regulations page](#)

Instructions for completion

1. The Academic Support Contact (ASC) or their nominee within the Faculty, RKE or Collaborative Partner should complete this form
2. Once completed the form should be shared with the student and the Parenthood Liaison Contact (PLC) to inform the Pregnancy-Parenthood Support Plan and the Student Advisors in Student Services.
3. A copy to be retained in the Faculty Office
4. A copy to be sent to: safety@winchester.ac.uk

There are specific risks and hazards present in the learning environment that may affect people that are either pregnant or of a childbearing age.

Managing the risks

Academic staff are best placed to inform the student of potential hazards and risks because they are familiar with the programme.

The student is responsible for discussing the potential hazards and risks identified with their midwife/medical advisor(s) to ensure that the control measures suggested are sufficient, given the student's personal circumstances and wellbeing.

To help you identify the hazards and appropriate ways of controlling them, use this template Risk Assessment Form for New and Expectant Birthing Parent Form. It covers the generic hazards and suggests control measures to reduce the risks to an acceptable level.

You should ensure that your document only addresses 'significant' hazards, i.e. any that could and more importantly are likely to, cause an accident or injury.

Don't include activities in your document that simply don't need to be there. Work to the principle that if there is any chance of a new or expectant mother being unaware of the safe way of doing something, then you will need to make the safe way clear on this form either in the Risk Control column or the additional Comments box at the end. Finally, always ensure any control measures you identify are followed up and only go so far 'as is reasonably practicable'.

Stress levels are individual and the student should discuss this separately with their Academic Support Contact and Parenthood Liaison Contact, where they have concerns.

Note: The list of potential hazards is not exhaustive and you should draw upon your knowledge of the student's academic programme to add to the form any additional hazards and / or risk control measures that could be taken to eliminate or reduce any potential risks.

For staff seeking advice when completing the Risk Assessment Form, please refer to the: [Health & Safety Executive Guidance for New and expectant mothers](#)

RISK ASSESSMENT FORM for NEW AND EXPECTANT BIRTHING PARENTS

Please complete this form electronically and the boxes will then expand to fit the text entered.

Personal Details			
Name of student		Student Number	
Programme		Date baby due/was born	First Child Yes/No

Note: The list of potential hazards below is **not** exhaustive and you should draw upon your knowledge of the student's academic programme to add to the form any additional hazards and / or risk control measures that could be taken to eliminate or reduce any potential risks.

Key for defining Risk and Residual Risk below			
L Likelihood Scale: 5 – Frequent 4 – Probable 3 – Occasional 2 – Improbable 1 - Remote	S Severity Scale: 5 – Catastrophic 4 – Major 3 – Reportable 2 – Serious 1 - Minor	DR Degree of Risk = Likelihood x Severity For example, if manual handling is rated 4 for likelihood and 2 for serious then DR = 8 (ie 4 x 2)	

Does the programme involve any of the following	Potential Hazards (add/delete/amend as appropriate)	Risk			Risk control measures to be taken (add/delete/amend as appropriate)	Residual Risk ¹⁰		
		L	S	DR		L	S	DR
Manual Handling	Postural problems through excessive manual handling operations may increase as pregnancy progresses				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All manual handling activities to be re-assessed for pregnant women The nature of the task may need to be altered to reduce the risk of injury 			

¹⁰ Residual risk is the level of risk that remains after suitable and sufficient risk control measures (identified in column 4 above) are introduced

RISK ASSESSMENT FORM for NEW AND EXPECTANT BIRTHING PARENTS

Please complete this form electronically and the boxes will then expand to fit the text entered.

Does the programme involve any of the following	Potential Hazards (add/delete/amend as appropriate)	Risk			Risk control measures to be taken (add/delete/amend as appropriate)	Residual Risk ¹⁰		
		L	S	DR		L	S	DR
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The amount of physical activities to be reduced accordingly and lifting aids to be provided Any specific recommendations from a GP to be observed 			
Activities where there is a risk of exposure to shocks, vibration or sudden movements	Regular exposure can increase risk of miscarriage. Long-term exposure to vibration may lead to risk of premature birth or low birth weight				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activities likely to involve uncomfortable whole body vibration to be avoided, especially at low frequencies. Also, where the abdomen is exposed to shock or jolts 			
Activities causing physical fatigue	Fatigue caused by excessive standing and/or by physical activities may lead to miscarriage, premature birth or low birth weight				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hours of activity and type of activity should be reviewed to minimise the risk 			
Using chemical agents during the work process	Use of chemical substances that may cause ill-health etc. to pregnant people				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The use of substances labelled as being likely to cause injury to a pregnant woman, nursing parent, unborn child or child of a nursing parent should be avoided COSHH assessments and Material Hazard Data Sheets to be obtained to indicate safe use of chemical substances 			
Work with display screen equipment	Stress, anxiety or postural issues may occur causing health problems				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workstations to be assessed with regard to pregnant students (additional space etc.) Sufficient rest breaks to be taken away from the screen 			

RISK ASSESSMENT FORM for NEW AND EXPECTANT BIRTHING PARENTS

Please complete this form electronically and the boxes will then expand to fit the text entered.

Does the programme involve any of the following	Potential Hazards (add/delete/amend as appropriate)	Risk			Risk control measures to be taken (add/delete/amend as appropriate)	Residual Risk ¹⁰		
		L	S	DR		L	S	DR
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tasks to be reviewed to alleviate stressful situations 			
Activities in extremes of heat and cold	Pregnant women may be more susceptible to heat stress and breast-feeding/chestfeeding may become impaired				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pregnant students not to be placed in areas where temperatures are either too hot or too cold Additional rest and refreshment breaks to be provided 			
Stress in relation to workload					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workload to be reviewed to alleviate stress 			
Using Ionized Radiation during the work process	Use of Ionized radiation above 1 mSv may have an increased risk of harm to the pregnant person and foetus.				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Universities Radiological Protection Supervisor (RPS) is to be informed immediately, and will contact the external Radiological Protection Advisor (RPA) for advice (as per XRF Local Rules). RPA advice on the matter to be abided by in line with IRR17, to maintain the Health and safety of the pregnant person and foetus. 			

Additional Comments if any

Signature Section			
Name of person(s) completing form		Position/Faculty	

RISK ASSESSMENT FORM for NEW AND EXPECTANT BIRTHING PARENTS

Please complete this form electronically and the boxes will then expand to fit the text entered.

Time and date completed		Date for revision (as appropriate)	
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