



**Student
Maternity,
Maternity Support
& Adoption Policy**

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Policy document based on good practice produced by Glasgow University, with permission of the original author. Adapted by: LISS Manager (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy) with the collaboration of the Student Pregnancy and Maternity Task & Finish group.

1. Introduction

SECTION A

This Policy provides advice and guidance to:

Pregnant students applicant and those who become pregnant during their studies, the partners of pregnant students, and to those who have recently become parents (e.g. through adoption) on issues related to study, health and safety, and finance; University staff who may have a role in advising students coming to them with these issues. This policy is produced within the Equality Challenge Unit (ECU) best practice guidance “Student pregnancy and maternity: implications for higher education institutions”. A copy is available from

<http://www.ecu.ac.uk/publications/files/student-pregnancy-and-maternity-implications-for-heis.doc/view>

Relevant Professional Statutory Regulatory Body (PSRB) requirements may override the contents of this policy and therefore advice should be sought from Academic Quality Standards Service or the appropriate Faculty prior to taking actions. For example the NHS Student Maternity Bursary Guidance (www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/1667.aspx) has certain requirements regarding time in study and time absent following maternity leave. Such rules must be adhered to if you engage in this course of study.

2. Scope of the Policy

The policy covers any student who becomes pregnant during her studies, and students who are about to become fathers. It also covers any student who is the partner (including same sex partner) of someone who is pregnant and expects to be responsible for the child, and any person becoming a parent (e.g. through adoption) of a child. The current legal framework is available in Appendix A.

3. Policy Statement

The University of Cumbria is committed to promoting equality in all its activities and aims to provide a work, learning, research and teaching environment free from discrimination and unfair treatment. The University is committed to:

- Avoiding less favourable treatment;
- Taking a flexible approach to dealing with issues in relation to pregnancy;
- Demonstrating a non-judgemental and sensitive approach;
- Enable informed choices for the student.

The University actively seeks to develop best practice in discharging its legal responsibility. The Equality Act 2010 places a duty to promote equality for the following protected characteristics including: pregnancy and maternity; age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation.

The University believes that becoming pregnant or caring for a child should not, in itself, prevent any student from succeeding in their studies. The University is committed to showing as much flexibility as possible to facilitate students' success, making sure no student is disadvantaged whilst ensuring academic standards are not compromised. The degree of flexibility that can be offered will vary between Faculties, due to the nature of the programmes and risks associated with being pregnant whilst engaged in studies, but all Faculties will follow the general approach set out in this document.

The health and safety of a pregnant student will be of paramount importance at all times, and Faculties will deal with all students covered by this policy in a sensitive, non-judgemental and confidential manner. Only members of staff or placement providers who need to be informed for valid reasons (such as the need to complete a

Risk Assessment to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of the mother and child) will be informed of a student's circumstances. This will be done with the student's prior knowledge.

SECTION B

4. Student Rights and Responsibilities

This section covers rights and responsibilities for students. It is recognised that it is primarily the responsibility of the student to engage with this policy and take appropriate and responsible actions (including seeking medical advice and support) to make informed decisions around her pregnancy and maternity.

4.1 *Students and applicants covered by this policy are **responsible for:***

Disclosing their pregnancy to External Relations (Admissions) (for applicants) or a trusted member of staff within their Faculty at an early stage of their pregnancy, with a view to discussing any necessary support arrangements or adjustments – particularly where elements of their assessment / programme of study might present a health and safety hazard to the student or unborn child. Students, ideally, should inform the University of a miscarriage or still birth to allow for appropriate support; Ensuring the safe supervision of any child they may bring onto campus including to any communal and study areas (such as Library facilities) where the needs of other users needs to be taken into consideration (i.e. noise levels in quiet study areas etc.)

Refer to the website www.StudentParents.org for further support.

4.2 *Students and applicants covered by this policy are **advised to:***

Read the policy and associated guidance notes in order to understand the University's approach to supporting pregnant students and students with very young children;
Ensure that they have a clear idea of what will be expected of them on their course of study in order to understand the potential impact of pregnancy related absence;
Discuss any concerns they have relating to their pregnancy with their own GP and, if required, staff in one or more of the following services: the Students' Union, LISS Counselling service, Occupational Health, Safety, Sustainability and Travel Service, Accommodation service and the Chaplaincy.

5. Guidance for students who become pregnant during their studies

5.1 *Confirming the Pregnancy*

A student who suspects she is pregnant should see her GP to have the pregnancy confirmed as soon as she can. If she decides to terminate the pregnancy, or miscarries, this need not be disclosed to the University. Absence from the University required as a result should be classed as 'sick leave' but there is no need to give the specific reason. Details of the University's Absence Policy can be found within course handbooks and via SaMIS.

5.2 *Contacting the Faculty*

If the student plans to continue with her pregnancy, she should let her Faculty know as soon as possible. The University can only make provision for the student if she lets them know she is pregnant. Whilst the PAT (Personal Academic Tutor), Programme Leader or postgraduate Supervisor would normally be the first point of contact, the student can initially choose to speak to another member of staff with whom she feels more comfortable. However, students should note that the PAT, Programme Leader or Supervisor will require to be informed. This is in the student's best interest as, in the event of an examination or other compulsory component being missed and the student being unable/unwilling to provide evidence (e.g. because it is of a confidential nature).

5.3 *Implications for Study*

The Faculty will meet with the student to discuss how the pregnancy is likely to impact on her study. There may need to be an interruption of studies depending on when the baby is due, and the student together with her PAT / Programme Leader / Supervisor will decide (1) whether an interruption is needed and (2) if so, the time period this needs to cover. This decision also needs to take into account the academic requirements of the student's programme. A student with a baby due near the examination period might require confirmation from her doctor that she is fit to sit exams. Time off might also be needed for medical appointments.

A plan should be devised (in writing) by the PAT/ Programme Leader / Supervisor or other nominated staff member, detailing any special arrangements required during the student's pregnancy, and the agreed timescale for her return to study. The student should receive a copy of this, as should other appropriate member(s) of staff requiring this information (including, where required). The student's permission should be established before passing on information. If the student continues to study during her pregnancy, she should meet regularly with her PAT/ Programme Leader or Supervisor or other designated member of staff, to assess the effectiveness of any special arrangements put in place. Where necessary, further adjustments can be made.

5.4 *Placements and Field work*

Where the student plans to take part in placements and field work as part of their studies, pregnancy should be risk assessed by the Faculty responsible for organising the placement / field work. There may be particular risks associated with the placement / field work and the student should discuss this fully with the appropriate member of staff and the placement provider. Students will, normally, be advised to refrain from taking part in field work after the 7th month of pregnancy.

Key in placement activities are to:

- Ensure that suitable placements can be arranged throughout the pregnancy to limit exposure to chemical, physical, microbiological, ergonomic or psychosocial hazards in the workplace;
- Ensure continuity in the educational programme.

Whilst on placement it is specific requirement of the placement provider to assess risk for pregnant workers which means that students must inform their placement. Continuation on placement is dependant on the outcome of the provider's risk assessment.

5.5 *Study abroad*

If the student becomes pregnant whilst on a study year abroad, she must contact the Faculty to make appropriate plans to ensure that health is safeguarded and academic progress is properly managed.

5.6 *International Students*

If an international student requires a Visa to remain in the UK during her period of study and her pregnancy is likely to result in the need to remain in the UK longer than planned, or if an international student is considering temporary withdrawal from her course of study, then immigration advice should be sought from the International Recruitment Team and SaMIS, as appropriate.

5.7 *Returning from maternity-related absence*

The date when a student intends to return from maternity-related absence should be discussed and agreed with the student prior to commencing the period of absence.

However, this date may change during the course of the absence, and students are encouraged to notify the University as soon as possible of any change in their expected return date. The University will review the student support plan and agree a new return date with the student in writing.

Before a student returns from a period of maternity-related absence, consideration should be given to her requirements on return. The student's study options and the continued support provided by the University should be discussed with the student in developing her support plan, and can be confirmed with the student prior to her return; examples include the following:

Varying the mode of study – Students should be aware of any options that exist to resume their course on a part-time or distance-learning basis and the financial implications from funding bodies etc of returning to a different mode of study. If a student requests to study part-time rather than full-time, the request should not be declined unless it can be justified, and the justification should be provided in writing;

- Ensure a smooth return – Welcome-back meetings will be organised with PAT/ Programme Leader or Supervisor;
- Continued contact – The student's key contact if they encounter any difficulties should be made clear;
- Other parents – The option could be provided of putting the student in contact with other student parents on her return to study.

The student must inform the Faculty when she is ready to return and plan with her PAT / Programme Leader or Supervisor an appropriate timetable for re-integration into her programme of study, including the examination schedule. The student must also notify SaMIS to ensure that her University record is updated to indicate that she is back on her programme of study.

5.8 Health and Safety

Pregnancy should not be equated with poor health. However, there are health and safety considerations that arise during pregnancy and breastfeeding, and the risks to which students could be exposed need to be assessed.

The highest risk of damage to the baby is during the first 13 weeks of pregnancy. Consequently, students should be encouraged to notify their institution as early as possible of their pregnancy so that a health and safety assessment can be conducted. Where a student is unsure whether she will proceed with her pregnancy, it may still be appropriate to conduct a risk assessment.

The level of risk to which a student is exposed will depend on the requirements and nature of her course. For many courses the risks will be low; courses that involve the following are more likely to present greater risks:

- physical activity, including lifting and carrying;
- the use of chemicals, including paints and pesticides;
- exposure to radiation;
- working in compressed air environments, such as underwater diving;
- where exposure to infectious disease is a possibility, including laboratory work, healthcare provision, and looking after animals or dealing with animal products.

There may be health and safety measures needing to be put in place in order to protect the student and her unborn baby, and this will be particularly relevant in certain Faculties (e.g. where the student might be exposed to harmful chemicals or radiation, or be expected to lift heavy objects or undertake other strenuous activity).

Therefore, once the student has let her Faculty know of her pregnancy, a Risk Assessment will be completed by the Faculty (see Appendix B). This will identify any risks that may be present which could harm the student or her baby, and detail steps that need to be put in place to alleviate or minimise these risks. It should also detail any risks that may arise from any placement period or fieldwork due to be undertaken.

Any student who has given birth must not return to University within two weeks of giving birth for health and safety reasons, as per statutory restrictions.

5.9 *Financial Considerations*

Undergraduate students should note that funding will usually stop when the suspension of study begins. Students should seek advice from their funding body (for example the NHS Bursary may be contacted via www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/1667.aspx. LISS are also available to support students in understanding money matters.

Students who choose to return to studies part time should consider how this may impact on funding availability.

Students should refer to the Academic procedures (withdrawals and Intercalations): <http://www.cumbria.ac.uk/AboutUs/Services/AQS/AcademicReq.aspx>

Postgraduate and Research students receiving funding from external bodies should follow the guidance for their particular scheme, or contact their funding body or sponsor for further advice. For example, nursing students must refer to the Nursing NHS Student Maternity Bursary Guidance at www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/1667.aspx .

International students with financial sponsors must contact their sponsors and agree a plan of action (such as deferring study/ when to resume study etc). Those international students who are not entitled to any maternity benefits in the UK may prefer to return home for the duration of their pregnancy. It should be remembered that most airlines will not carry passengers who are 7 months pregnant or more, and this should be taken into account when planning.

The benefit rules are different for EU students and international students, and further advice should be sought from the International Office, Department for Work and Pensions.

Due to periodic changes in funding arrangements, students are advised to check with funding bodies about up to date funding provisions.

5.10 *Accommodation*

Students who become pregnant, or those with babies, whilst living in University accommodation may find that this is no longer suitable for health and safety reasons. Contact should be made with the Accommodation Office (FM) for advice. Refunds are not available for leaving accommodation part way through a tenancy.

5.11 *Babies/Children on Campus*

For health and safety reasons, as well as to avoid the disruption of classes or study, babies and children may only be brought into teaching or learning areas at the permission of the academic member of staff or LISS and in exceptional circumstances only. Students must ensure they have suitable childcare arrangements in place at times when they are expected to be at University. There is a nursery based on the Lancaster campus www.u4cpreschoolcentre.co.uk .

Students may bring babies and children into public areas of the University so long as there is no disruption to other users (i.e. in public areas of the Library etc), but the University cannot accept any liability for the child in these circumstances. The University provides baby change facilities on campus.

5.12 Breastfeeding

Nursing mothers should be aware that there are no specific facilities for expressing milk on campus and alternative arrangements should be made. The University supplies a fridge and microwave in the Nursery at Lancaster campus. Currently, there are no facilities at the Carlisle campuses. Occupational Health, Safety, Sustainability and Travel Service can provide information on breastfeeding facilities provided at the University.

6. Support for fathers and partners (including same-sex partners) who have responsibility for bringing up the child

Any student discovering he is to become a father, or any partner of a pregnant student (including same sex partners) who expect to be responsible for raising the child with the mother, will be entitled to request time out of study. This is likely to include time off for medical appointments prior to, and after, the birth, as well as a period of maternity support leave immediately following the birth. A student in this situation should contact his/her PAT/ Programme Leader or Supervisor or other staff member, to discuss this. Flexibility will be shown where possible although this will necessarily be more limited in some programmes than others. It should be noted that the PAT/ Programme Leader or Supervisor will require to be informed, even if discussions involve a different staff member.

For students receiving research funding, it may be possible for a period of maternity support leave to be allowed, and students should contact their sponsor or provider prior to arranging leave.

7. For students about to become parents (e.g. through adoption)

Students about to become parents (e.g. through adoption) should inform their Faculty of their circumstances as soon as possible. Arrangements can be made to allow time out of study. This may vary depending on the age of the child, the programme of study being undertaken, and the point in the academic session at which the event takes place. Again, the PAT / Programme Leader or Supervisor will be informed if discussions involve a different staff member.

8. Complaints

Any student who feels that the University has failed to comply with the policy may raise a complaint under the University's Complaints Procedure www.cumbria.ac.uk/studentprocedures . It is suggested that problems are resolved as informally as possible in the first instance. The LISS Service and the Students' Union can provide impartial, confidential advice to students in this situation.

9. Staff Rights and Responsibilities

This section covers rights and responsibilities for staff and the University.

9.1 *The University will ensure that:*

- Any student who becomes pregnant before or during a period of study at the University is accommodated as far as practicable to allow her to complete her programme of study, providing academic standards are upheld;
- Relevant staff are made aware of the terms of this policy and their responsibilities arising under it;
- Support and guidance is available for staff undertaking risk assessments on elements of the programme of study that are likely to result in a risk to the health and safety of the student or unborn child;
- Staff in LISS are available to discuss with staff the best way to support the continuing study of a pregnant student to ensure she is able to complete her programme of study;
- Appropriate support is available to students through various support services;
- The policy is kept under review and updated as necessary.

9.2 *Faculties must ensure that:*

- The policy is widely publicised and available to staff and students;
- Female students are made aware of the policy and encouraged to disclose a pregnancy in confidence at an early stage, particularly where elements of their programme of study might result in a risk to the health and safety of the student or unborn child;
- Staff are aware of the policy so that they can respond appropriately when a student discloses her pregnancy and seeks support to continue her programme of study;
- As soon as a student discloses that she is pregnant, a risk assessment, or series of risk assessments (some will be undertaken by the placement provider), are undertaken to ensure that there are no elements of the programme of study that present a risk to the health and safety of the student or the unborn child;
- Wherever practicable, accommodation is made to ensure that a pregnant student, or student with a very young child, is able to complete her programme of study;
- If requested, a female member of staff is identified with whom a pregnant student can discuss her support needs;
- The student is given information on other sources of advice/support.

9.3 *External Relations (Admissions) must ensure that:*

- Students are encouraged to disclose pregnancy prior to engaging in admissions activities including interviews, practical tests and assessments;
- Manage the admissions activities to ensure the student receives appropriate support.

9.4 *Individual staff members*

- All individual staff members are advised to:
- Familiarise themselves with this document and the University's responsibilities towards students who are pregnant or have very young children

9.5 *Individual staff members to whom a pregnancy is disclosed are responsible for:*

- Treating any disclosure of a pregnancy seriously and making students aware of appropriate sources of support;
- Respecting a student's right to confidentiality and verifying that a student has no objections to their pregnancy being discussed with others – particularly when information needs to be passed onto other staff members to arrange any agreed accommodations to the programme of study or adjustments to fees;
- Ensuring accurate information is given to prospective students regarding the availability of support for students who are pregnant or have very young children;
- Seeking advice from colleagues or LISS (including mental health and counselling support as appropriate) within the University if they are unsure of how best to support the continued study of a pregnant student.

10. **Guidance for Staff**

This section provides guidance on the support of students coming under the scope of this policy, for use by any member of staff with a role in advising or supporting students. At all times, staff must ensure those students are not treated less favourably than any other student on the basis of their circumstances. In line with the University's legal obligations, flexibility should be shown where possible to ensure continued learning is facilitated. Information given by students should be treated confidentially (being passed on where necessary only with the student's consent) and with sensitivity. Staff should not attempt to influence any student's decision but should provide impartial advice.

When a student contacts a member of staff to discuss any circumstances covered by this policy, a response should, normally, be made within five working days and a meeting arranged as soon as possible thereafter. If the member of staff being contacted by the student is not the student's PAT / Programme Leader or Supervisor, the PAT / Programme Leader or Supervisor should nonetheless be kept informed. Staff must inform the student of this intention.

Whilst it is recognised that each request must be dealt with on an individual basis, there are a number of measures that can be used in order to enable the student's continuation of study. These include:

- Admissions arrangements including interviewing, assessment and testing are appropriate managed by External Relations (Admissions);
- Allowing time out of study (for a pre-determined amount of time) for the birth and a period of time thereafter;
- Prior to and after the birth, giving permission for periods of absence for medical appointments, and making arrangements for the student to catch up on missed classes;
- Showing a degree of flexibility regarding assignment deadlines if the student's circumstances make it difficult for them to be met;

The academic regulations state that Extenuating Circumstances (EC) are *serious and exceptional circumstances* outside the student's control, normally *unforeseeable and unpreventable*. (Appendix 3e – Extenuating circumstances Procedures, 2.1.1). Therefore a student unable to attend an examination due to pregnancy would not normally fall within the EC process, this would only occur if an unforeseeable

complication for example illness associated with the pregnancy occurred shortly before or on the day of the exam. The guidance on the ECs form states:

‘Students with long term ill health, pregnancy, special needs, disability or any other condition that may adversely affect their studies should divulge such circumstances, to an academic tutor, before the commencement of the academic year or as soon as known so that appropriate arrangements can be made. These types of circumstances should not be considered as extenuating circumstances. However, complications as a result of pregnancy could be claimed as part of the EC process if they have adversely affected a student’s performance’

A pregnant student who is unable to attend an exam would negotiate an alternative date to sit the exam with the course tutor and in instances where a student intercalates due to pregnancy the exam would be arranged for their return.

An extenuating circumstance form (see Appendix C) must be completed explaining that the student is unable to attend the examination due to reason of pregnancy.

Consideration of any requests to transfer to part-time study, where this is possible (although the student should bear in mind the financial implications of this course of action). Staff should refer the student to the useful contacts section; Offering support to help the student reintegrate to their studies after any period of prolonged absence.

It is important to take the views and wishes of the student into account, 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, care must be taken to ensure that academic standards are not compromised. A balance must be achieved between ensuring the student is not disadvantaged, and giving undue special treatment. It is not necessary for the University to grant every request made, although efforts should be made to meet reasonable requests. Requests should not be refused solely on the basis of being too costly to implement, although this will necessarily be considered when assessing the overall ‘reasonableness’ of a request. If any request is refused, the reasons for the refusal should be provided in writing for the student.

Where specific arrangements are required to be put in place for a student who is already granted additional arrangements (e.g. on the grounds of disability), these should be kept separate in order that it remains clear which arrangements relate to which particular circumstance. This ensures that these arrangements are in place for the required amount of time and also clarifies adherence to the different pieces of legislation.

Legal protection for students during pregnancy and maternity

The Equality Act 2010 significantly strengthens legal protection for students (including applicants to higher education) during pregnancy and maternity in England, Scotland and Wales. The Act considers pregnancy and maternity to be a protected characteristic and prohibits discrimination on these grounds.

Section 17 of the Act expands the protection from discrimination on the grounds of pregnancy and maternity, which already exists for women in the workplace and vocational training, to women outside the workplace. In doing so, the Act specifically mentions the higher education sector. Under the Act, discrimination can occur against a student because of her pregnancy or because she has given birth if:

- the student is treated unfavourably because of her pregnancy;
- within 26 weeks of the day of giving birth the student is treated unfavourably because she has given birth; this also applies in cases of miscarriage, still birth and neonatal death provided more than 24 weeks of the pregnancy has elapsed;
- the student is treated unfavourably because she is breastfeeding and the child is less than 26 weeks old; if the child is more than 26 weeks old, unfavourable treatment because of breastfeeding is likely to constitute sex discrimination.

The protection afforded due to pregnancy and maternity is narrower than other protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. Consequently there is no protection afforded for discrimination that occurs by being associated with someone who is pregnant or in a period of maternity, or being perceived to be pregnant or in a period of maternity. However, if a woman's partner is treated unfavourably because of her pregnancy or because she has given birth, this may constitute sex discrimination.

Under the Act, it is unlawful for HEI's to discriminate against applicants and students in relation to admissions; the provision of education; access to any benefit, facility or service; and disciplinary proceedings. The protected characteristic of pregnancy and maternity is included in the public sector equality duty (PSED) of the Equality Act. The PSED requires HEI's to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it

Section 17 of the Equality Act 2010 commenced on 1 October 2010 and the PSED is expected to commence in April 2011. In the meantime, the gender equality duty continues to apply to HEI's in England, Scotland and Wales.

Advice for Pregnant Students

This advice is intended to complement any other advice you may have received.

General Advice

- Follow any advice you have been given by your doctor or midwife.
- Avoid lifting and carrying heavy loads
- Avoid standing or sitting for long periods of time – don't be afraid to leave a lecture half way through if you feel uncomfortable
- Avoid exposure to infectious diseases
- Avoid exposure to lead
- Be aware of stress - if you are feeling stressed from the pressures of university work be sure to mention this to your tutor / health worker
- If you spend a lot of time using computers ensure that you maintain good posture - make sure that your chair is good quality, in good condition and that you can adjust the height of the seat and the lumbar support, avoid using computers for extended periods without a break (take at least 10 minutes break for every hour worked). Some concerns have been raised about the effect of non-ionising radiation from computer monitors on foetal development, but all evidence so far collected suggests that there is no risk whatsoever
- Avoid exposure to radioactive material
- Do not smoke
- Avoid passive smoking
- Avoid alcohol
- Avoid working for long periods without a break
- Avoid excessively noisy areas

Placement Advice

When you go on placement, your employer will need to do a full pregnancy risk assessment to ensure the health and safety of you and your baby. In order for them to do this, you must inform them of your pregnancy, in writing. They will then be obliged to carry out the risk assessment. If you do not inform them, they are not required to take any action and may ask you to take part in activities which could place you or your baby at risk.

Once the risk assessment has been completed the risk assessor will identify the actions that need to be taken in order to keep you and your baby safe. These actions will be one of the following:

- Action One: your working hours or conditions may be temporarily adjusted
- Action Two: you may be offered suitable alternative work

Action Three: you may be suspended from work for as long as necessary to protect the health and safety of yourself and your baby.

It is important that you take any appropriate action to safeguard the health of your baby and yourself. If you need any further help or advice, please contact the Occupational Health Centre on 01524 384267, or Learning, Information and Student Services 01768 893631

RISK ASSESSMENT FORM

| Risk Assessment For | | Assessment Undertaken By | | Assessment Review | |
|---|---|---|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|
| Faculty: | | Name | | Name: | |
| Location of Activity: University Campuses and Practical Session Locations | | Date: | | Date: | |
| Activity: Pregnant individual engaged in normal aspects of academic study, practicals and field activities | | Signed by xxx | | Next Review Date (on or before) | |
| Significant hazards | List existing controls, or refer to safety procedures etc. | For risks, which are not adequately controlled, (i.e. as low as possible) list the action needed. | level of risk: high med low | | |
| Computers, screens, desk and study environments | Workstation provides adjustment to allow for increase in abdominal size Advice available on suitable posture to prevent musculoskeletal problems Ensure long periods of sitting are avoided by engaging in other activity (Risk of DVT) | Pregnant individual to inform member of staff of discomfort or need for change in posture required Staff to ensure suitable breaks in teaching or activities to allow pregnant individual to change position or alleviate discomfort | Low | | |
| Slips, trips and falls | If individual experience mobility difficulties in later stages of pregnancy they are to make use of ramps, handrails and lifts accordingly In later stages of pregnancy exemption from physically demanding and outdoor activities should be afforded the individual, with alternative study or engagement permitted | Due to physical and hormonal changes, increased potential risk Detail of likely terrain and levels of physical exertion (practical / field activity) to be discussed with individual with their current condition being considered | Low | | |
| Lifting and carrying; manual | Minimising of need for carrying or lifting weights to be a consideration for taught sessions | Pregnant individual to keep staff and informed of any need for assistance | Low | | |

| | | | |
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| handling | In later stages of pregnancy no lifting or carrying is to be expected as part of taught sessions Staff and students to assist in carrying individuals personal baggage in later stages of pregnancy or as requested by individual | Pregnant individual to ensure does not attempt to be self reliant past own or advised limitations | |
| Posture and movement; welfare and fatigue | Ensure adequate toilet facilities provision to prevent infection and kidney disease Where standing and walking are required for any duration provide breaks and seating to rest, physical capability is reduced during pregnancy Activities which require dexterity, agility, coordination, speed, reach and balance – this can increase the risk of accident | On trips regular breaks will have to be scheduled, consider increased pressure and capacity of bladder as pregnancy progresses Consider provision of a quiet area where the individual may rest, individual to be allowed access to tutorial rooms if available Workstation adjustments, as appropriate | Low |
| Lone working | Pregnant women are more likely to need urgent medical attention | May be necessary to review and revise student access to communications, supervision and emergency procedures. | Med |
| Stress | Due to physiological, physical and hormonal changes, individual can be more susceptible to stress Staff are to ensure no undue stress is caused with regards study, deadlines or collaborative work | Extensions / extenuating circumstances may need to be provided or applied for with a view to attendance and assignments, with the main consideration being to alleviate stress | Low |
| Ionising radiation | Significant exposure can harm the foetus. This could be either through external exposure or by breathing in radioactive contamination. | Studies should be designed to keep the exposure below the limit for pregnant women | High Radiograp |
| Electro magnetic fields / waves | Over-exposure to radio-frequency radiation could cause harm by raising body temperature | May occur in some Science roles | Med |
| Infection / disease (toxoplasmos salmonella, E. Coli, etc) | Individual should avoid coming into contact with animal faeces, and should not pick up dog faeces or clean out litter trays Student must avoid contact with lambs or sheep at lambing time | Seek expert advice when interacting with domestic or wild animals | |

| | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
| | <p>Student must observe good hygiene practices and be encouraged to regularly and thoroughly wash her hands with soap and water especially before eating or drinking</p> <p>Personal Protective Equipment (gloves, face mask, lab coat) must be worn as required to reduce the risk of contamination</p> | | |
| Biological agent hazard group 2, 3, 4 | Many agents within the three risk groups can affect the unborn child if the mother is infected during pregnancy, e.g. hepatitis B, HIV, herpes, TB, Syphilis, Chlamydia, cytomegal, cytomegalovirus, chicken pox, typhoid | Control measures must be considered (especially in Science or Health courses) | Med |
| Substances labelled R40,R45, R46, R47; mercury and mercury derivatives | <p>These substances may cause risk to health to you and/ or the unborn or breastfed child, depending on how they are used</p> <p>When undertaking laboratory work or using dark rooms, harmful chemicals must not be handled</p> <p>Pharmaceuticals such as cytotoxic drugs must be avoided</p> | Protection will be given against exposure to lead and asbestos | Med for courses which are exposed to chemicals |
| Chemical agents dangerous / absorbed through the skin (such as pesticides) or breathed | <p>Risk will depend on the way in which the substance is being used, as well as its hazardous properties</p> <p>Absorption through the skin can result from localised contamination – e.g. splashes on the skin or clothing , or in certain cases from exposure to high atmospheric concentrations of vapour</p> <p>Air born agent such as carbon monoxide, dry cleaning agents and gluteraldehyde and anaesthetic gases</p> | Avoid using areas on campus where chemicals may be used by Facilities Management Service or within Outdoor Studies, farming courses | Med |
| Lead and lead derivatives | <p>The nervous system of young children is particularly sensitive to the toxic effects of lead, and you should avoid this kind of exposure</p> <p>Lead may affect students who work with paints and glazes (e.g. in Art courses) as well as with chemicals</p> | Faculty of ABS (Art courses) may be of particular risk and local advice should be sought | Med for Art courses |

| | | | |
|---------------------------------|---|---|------|
| Temperature / Humidity | <p>Staff to ensure temperature and humidity to be suitably controlled where possible</p> <p>Staff to advise on suitable clothing / equipment if working outside</p> <p>Breastfeeding can be impaired by heat dehydration</p> | <p>In outdoor environments staff to monitor conditions and amend activity if required</p> <p>Ensure drinking water available or carried</p> | Low |
| Travel | <p>For long journeys schedule regular breaks (see welfare and fatigue)</p> <p>When advised by a doctor individual may be excused wearing a seat belt in a vehicle</p> | <p>Individual should not sit in front of vehicle if not wearing a seat belt</p> <p>Exemption from wearing a seat belt should be proven by signed doctors letter</p> | Med |
| Heights (Climbing) | <p>The wearing of a sit harness is prohibited, use of a full body harness that does not cover the abdomen may be considered</p> <p>Coordination and balance can be effected use of activities like high ropes should be avoided in later stages of pregnancy</p> <p>Suspension in a harness is prohibited other than for lowering off</p> | <p>Pregnant individual to keep staff informed of condition and whether happy to participate</p> <p>Participation should not be a requirement of study with alternatives offered</p> | Low |
| Water (Canoe / kayak / sailing) | <p>As abdominal size increases kayaking will be prohibited due to difficulties in exiting the boat</p> <p>Restrictive (tight) clothing such as wetsuits could cause discomfort</p> | <p>Pregnant individual to keep staff informed of condition and whether happy to participate</p> <p>Participation should not be a requirement of study with alternatives offered</p> | Low |
| Cycling | <p>Mountain biking and the associated risk of falling must be considered prohibited from the outset of pregnancy</p> | | High |
| Caving | <p>See Water See Heights</p> <p>Caution needs to be taken with confined spaces especially with regards restricted movement, there is a need to be able to move without remaining in one position for too long</p> <p>As pregnancy progresses caving will have to be prohibited</p> | | Low |

| | | | |
|---|--|--|-----|
| Walking (Outdoor environment) | See temperature / humidity See trips and falls See welfare / fatigue Individual to use caution and consider limiting distances covered | Consider use of walking poles to improve stability on uneven ground Keep staff informed of assistance needed | Low |
| <p>Note: The risks documented above cover most situations that a student or member of staff might encounter, however no risk assessment can be completely exhaustive. It is expected that the pregnant individual will at all times put her and the baby's welfare first. To enable staff to better assist and tailor activities accordingly there is a requirement for the pregnant individual to keep members of staff aware of any concerns or issues that may arise. No course requirement i.e. assessment or practical undertaking should be penalised as a result of non-participation due to the pregnancy. Alternatives should be offered where practical or under extenuating circumstances alternate dates should be considered. Additional support and advice is available via Occupational Health.</p> | | | |

CONFIDENTIAL

CLAIM FOR CONSIDERATION OF EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES IN ASSESSMENT

Note: You must read the guidance notes prior to completion and submission.

| Section A: STUDENT DETAILS (BLOCK CAPITALS) | | | | | |
|---|--|----------------------|-------------------|---------------------|---|
| Surname | | Forename(s) | | | |
| Student ID No | | Faculty | | | |
| Programme | | Campus/site of study | | | |
| Year/Level of study | | Academic Year | | | |
| Section B: DETAILS OF MODULES AFFECTED | | | | | |
| Modules and/or components affected. Please list only those affected , not all studied | | | | | |
| Module Code | Module Title | Exam Date | Was the exam sat? | Assignment due date | Was the assignment submitted by due date? |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| For assignment submissions was an extension agreed? YES/NO If YES, was the assignment submitted by the extension date? YES/NO | | | | | |
| Section C: DETAILS OF THE NATURE OF THE CIRCUMSTANCES | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> a serious personal illness <input type="checkbox"/> the death, or serious illness, of a close family member, friend or person for whom I have responsibility of care <input type="checkbox"/> other sudden or unforeseen circumstances beyond reasonable control | | | | | |
| Time Period(s) affected: | | | | | |
| Details: (Please give brief details of the nature of the circumstances you believe have affected your performance/attendance, in what way, and to what extent, and whether you have discussed the matter with anyone at the University.) | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
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| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| Section D: DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE | | | | | |
| List the documentary evidence you are submitting with this report e.g. medical certificate etc.: | | | | | |
| Type of documentation | If unable to supply documentary evidence, please indicate when you will be able to provide corroborative evidence: | | | | |
| 1. | | | | | |
| 2. | | | | | |
| 3. | | | | | |
| 4. | | | | | |

Section E: DECLARATION

I declare that the information on this claim is correct and complete to the best of my knowledge and I authorise the University to make enquiries to verify the accuracy of the information I have supplied if required. I understand the information will be disclosed to the Extenuating Circumstances Panel. I will inform the University immediately if there are any changes to these circumstances which have any significance to this application.

Signature:

Date:

For Office use only:

Received by:

Signature

Date

Receipt given to
student**GUIDANCE NOTES: For students in relation to completion of a claim for consideration of extenuating circumstances (EC).**

All sections of the form must be completed **in full** to ensure appropriate consideration by the EC panel.

DETAILS OF MODULES AFFECTED

1. List all modules affected by the EC claim.
2. Identify the specific assessment item(s) affected e.g. examination, coursework 1, coursework 2, portfolio, placement etc. and ensure that exam dates and/or assignment submission dates are included on the form.
3. You must be aware that attendance at examinations is taken to imply that you are fit to undertake the examination and therefore special consideration after you have sat an examination is **NOT** permitted.

DETAILS OF THE NATURE OF THE CIRCUMSTANCES

1. Extenuating circumstances are serious and exceptional circumstances or events which are unexpected and unavoidable and outside of the student's control. Examples of these may be a serious illness or accident, death or serious illness of a close relative or friend or serious disruption to personal life – such as divorce, burglary, major fire or major court proceedings. The term does not include minor illnesses or the everyday frustrations of life which you are expected to manage your study around.

Examples of problems that are **NOT** normally valid as reason for Ecs are:

- Minor medical conditions such as: colds, headaches, minor accidents or injuries, sleeping problems and minor anxiety and stress.
- Social obligations and similar avoidable commitments such as holidays, weddings, parties and sporting fixtures.
- Avoidable study related factors such as computer crashes, corrupted or lost disks, printer malfunction, deadline congestion or lost notes.

3. Students with long term ill health, pregnancy, special needs, disability or any other condition that may adversely affect their studies should divulge such circumstances, to an academic tutor, before the commencement of the academic year or as soon as known so that appropriate arrangements can be made. These types of circumstances should not be considered as extenuating circumstances.

However, complications as a result of pregnancy could be claimed as part of the EC process if they have adversely affected a student's performance.

DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

1. Details of Ecs should be brief but include all relevant facts and **must** be supported by evidence from an independent source, e.g. a medical practitioner. All supporting documentation must be dated and relate specifically to the duration of the assessment claimed on the form.
2. Evidence to support Ecs of a non-medical nature could include a statement from a person who can verify your circumstances from a position of authority and whose evidence is impartial and objective.

OTHER INFORMATION

1. Claims **must** be submitted within **5 working days** of the last assessment for the module to ensure consideration by the appropriate module assessment board.

Claims and evidence provided retrospectively will not normally be accepted. If later you present evidence of extenuating circumstances as grounds for appeal, then good reason must be given as to why it was not disclosed at the appropriate time for consideration prior to the meeting of the module assessment board.

Return the form and evidence in the confidential envelope provided to your local Student Information Point (SIP) or send to: Extenuating Circumstances Secretary, Student Information Point, University of Cumbria, Bowerham Road, Lancaster, LA1 3JD.