

## New and Expectant Mothers Procedure

### Document Control

Version	Date Document Reviewed	Publication on Web Site	Date of next Review	Summary of main changes
0.1	March 2016	April 2016	March 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Conversion from Policy to Procedure</li> <li>○ Checked for legal compliance</li> <li>○ Minor changes to update terminology or to reflect current practices</li> </ul>
0.2	October 2017	October 2017	October 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Checked for legal compliance</li> </ul>
0.3	April 2019	April 2019	November 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Checked for legal compliance</li> <li>○ Link to Supporting Families Procedure removed and the link to the relevant People Services webpage inserted</li> </ul>
0.4	August 2021	August 2021	August 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Checked for legal compliance</li> </ul>

# New and Expectant Mothers Procedure

## 1 Introduction

This procedure forms part of the University's Health and Safety Management System and should be considered in relation to the University's Safety, Health and Wellbeing Policy to ensure that the risks associated with new and expectant mothers are appropriately assessed and managed.

The University recognises that pregnancy is a part of normal life and not a state of ill health, but that there are some activities that may put at risk the health of staff and students who are a new or expectant mother. The Health and Safety Executive defines new and expectant mothers as pregnant, (or their unborn child), currently breast feeding or who have given birth within the past 6 months.

This procedure applies to all Schools and Departments within the University. The aim is to outline the assessment process for New and Expectant Mothers to assist Executive members and all managers in discharging their health and safety responsibilities taking into account the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and the Equality Act 2010.

In addition to this procedure, information on maternity leave in relation to work or study may be required. Staff should refer to the People Services webpage on [Childbirth/Adoption Leave](#) and students should speak to their programme lead or the campus life department.

## 2 Accountabilities

Responsibility for implementing this procedure predominantly lies with the Executive members and all managers who must ensure all of the following requirements are addressed and implemented within their areas of responsibility and control.

### Responsibilities of Managers

- Ensure that assessments (general and specific) consider the risks to females of childbearing age, new and expectant mothers and their unborn child, that they are reviewed on notification of pregnancy, during different stages of pregnancy and whilst breastfeeding
- Ensure the relevant support is provided. For example, for staff, an appointment with the line manager should be offered to allow the opportunity to discuss concerns relating to, for example, feeding, childcare, the working environment and shift patterns
- Be supportive and flexible, with respect to working patterns when a breastfeeding mother returns to work. This may mean changing working conditions and frequency of breaks. Additional breaks may be required that will allow a mother time to express breast milk

## **Responsibilities of New and Expectant Mothers**

- Staff should inform their line manager in writing as early as possible that they are pregnant and again if breastfeeding. Students should inform their programme lead.

### **3 Procedure**

#### **3.1 Assessment of Risk**

The risk assessments (i.e. general and specific, for example, Display Screen Equipment (DSE) and Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH), manual handling) completed for School and Departmental activities should already have taken new and expectant mothers into consideration however these should be reviewed when a member of staff or student provides official notification or identifies that she is pregnant. In relation to students, this should include those on work experience or placement.

The review should be carried out in discussion with the member of staff/student and include checking whether any new risks have arisen, ensuring that controls in place are adequate and information about the risks and the protective measures put in place are communicated. Where assessment shows there is no risk, then no further action is required.

Where the member of staff indicates that there may be health concerns or complications with the pregnancy, the line manager should arrange for them to be referred, via the Directorate of People Services, to the Occupational Health Service for further advice, where any concerns can be discussed in the strictest confidence. Where a risk cannot be avoided by other means, then suitable alternative work may be offered where reasonable to do so.

The assessment(s) should be reviewed periodically as the pregnancy continues as the risk to the unborn child may increase at different stages of the pregnancy. For example, the dexterity, co-ordination, speed of movement and reach may be impaired due to increased size as the pregnancy develops. Therefore, duties may require some modification, for example, move to another work area or to different duties at an appropriate time during pregnancy.

In addition, the risk assessment should be reviewed on the member of staff/students return to the University following maternity leave.

In addition to staff and students, visitors to the University should be notified by the relevant School or Department of any potential hazards prior to entering high risk areas that may affect a new and expectant mother.

### **4 Further Information**

Further information can be found through the following HSE documents:

- [HSE leaflet 'New and expectant mothers who work; A brief guide to your health and safety'](#).
- [Infection risks to new and expectant mothers in the workplace.](#)

**The following Organisations are sources of useful information:**

- La Leche League [www.laleche.org.uk](http://www.laleche.org.uk)
- The National Childbirth Trust (NCT) [www.nct.org.uk](http://www.nct.org.uk)
- Association of Breastfeeding Mothers [www.abm.me.uk](http://www.abm.me.uk)
- UNICEF UK Baby Friendly Initiative [www.unicef.org.uk/babyfriendly](http://www.unicef.org.uk/babyfriendly)