

Student Pregnancy & Family Leave Policy

August 2023

Directorate of Student Services

NB. This policy is available on the University of Cumbria website, and it should be noted that any printed copies are uncontrolled and cannot be guaranteed to constitute the current version of the policy.

POLICY SCHEDULE	
Policy title	Student Pregnancy & Family Leave Policy
Policy owner	Director of Student and Staff Service
Policy lead contact	EDI Officer with Head of Student Support
Approving body	EDIW Committee
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Date of implementation	1 September 2023
Version no. Summary of changes since the previous version	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated logo. • Amended policy title. • Amended Directorate responsible • Relocated EDI section and wording is our University Inclusivity Statement. • Scope now includes fostering and embedded throughout • Scope now includes definition of "student" • Added clarity for students to disclose to their placement provider and/or employer • MyCumbria link added to 6.1 for quick access to support services • 6.2.7 amended wording to provide clarity around Advance HE guidance and returning from maternity leave • Liaised with internal colleagues on

	<p>GDPR/confidentiality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated narrative around intercalation and apprentice information. • Updated financial consideration narrative. • Added information on expressing rooms. • Gender neutral language adopted and updated where appropriate. • Support Form/pregnancy risk assessment updated with gender neutral terminology added. • Reviewed and updated links.
Related Guidelines, Procedures, Codes of Practice etc.	<p>Health & Safety Risk Assessments</p> <p>Safeguarding Protocols re children on campus</p> <p>Student pregnancy and maternity: implications for higher education institutions</p>
Related stakeholder's responsible e.g. are there external stakeholders who have related responsibility and if so, for which area of the Policy?	NA
Review interval	3 years

Student Pregnancy & Family Leave Policy

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2. Introduction

The University has a duty of care for all its students and a responsibility to ensure that staff and students comply with health and safety legislation in order to protect the well-being of everyone.

3. Equality Diversity and Inclusion

The University has an approved inclusivity statement that is at the heart of this policy: ***University Inclusivity Statement (approved by University Board 05.2021)***

The University of Cumbria is committed to providing an inclusive environment where staff, students and visitors are encouraged to be their true self, in order to enhance the individual and collective experience. As a university community, we share the social responsibility of enabling this inclusive environment by valuing, respecting and celebrating differences, to ensure that we generate a sense of understanding and belonging.

The University recognises that our differences are our strength, seeing and valuing different perspectives and ideas, in an environment that is without prejudice and bias.

We are committed to embracing our responsibility as a facilitator of change and continue to develop our equality agenda in line with and, where appropriate, beyond the Equality Act 2010. We do not tolerate discrimination, bullying or harassment in any form on the grounds of

- Age,
- Disability,
- Gender reassignment,
- Marriage and civil partnership,
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race (includes race, colour, nationality – including citizenship, ethnic or national origins)
- Religion or belief including philosophical belief and a lack of belief,
- Sex
- Sexual orientation.

4. Aims and Objectives

This policy sets out the support that the University will provide for students who are pregnant when they apply to the University or who become pregnant or become parents during their period of study.

5. Scope

This policy provides advice and guidance to:

- any student (student is defined as any University of Cumbria learner, on any programme of study, including Higher Level Apprentices (HLA)) who is pregnant when they apply to the University
- any student who becomes pregnant during their studies
- any student who becomes a parent (e.g. through adoption or fostering) while studying at the university
- any student who is the partner (including same-sex partner and inclusive of all gender identities) of someone who is pregnant and who expects to be responsible for the child

6. The Policy Principles

The University is committed to giving students the best possible support, whatever their circumstances, in order that they can achieve their potential. We will endeavor to be as flexible as possible (bearing in mind any restrictions due to the nature of the course) in order to facilitate student success whilst ensuring that academic standards are not compromised.

6.1. Student Rights and Responsibilities

Students have a right to expect:

- Not to be treated less favourably due to their pregnancy, adoption or fostering
- To be treated with respect at all times
- To be allowed to make their own decisions
- To have their information treated confidentially
- To discuss their situation with a member of staff and agree a support plan

Appendix A details the Legal protection for students during pregnancy and maternity.

It is the responsibility of the student to:

- Take appropriate actions (including seeking medical advice and support) in relation to their pregnancy, adoption or fostering
- Make informed decisions around their pregnancy and maternity or adoption or fostering leave plans
- Disclose their pregnancy to Admissions (for applicants)
- Disclose their pregnancy or intention to adopt or foster to a member of staff within their academic department and/or placement provider at an early stage of their pregnancy, adoption or fostering, and to discuss 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.
- Parents/Guardians remain responsible for any child under 18 that they bring onto University premises and those children should remain under parental supervision at all times
- Read and engage with this policy in order to understand the University's approach to supporting pregnant students, and students who plan to adopt 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 or adoption-related absence
- Discuss any concerns they have relating to their pregnancy with their own GP and, if appropriate, staff in one or more of the following services: the Students' Union, Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Service, Occupational Health, Health and Safety, Accommodation Services and the Chaplaincy. Students can seek support from the Directorate of Student Services by referring themselves through the Student Enquiry Point. These services can be accessed via [Student Enquiry Point | Student Enquiry Point \(symplicity.com\)](#)

6.2. Guidance for students who become pregnant during their studies

6.2.1 *Confirming the pregnancy*

A student who thinks that they are pregnant should see their GP to have the pregnancy confirmed as soon as they can. If they decide to terminate the pregnancy, or miscarry, this need not be disclosed to the University. However, if this information is shared with the

University, then appropriate support can be provided. Absence from the University required as a result should be classed as 'sick leave' but there is no need to give the specific reason.

6.2.2 Contacting the academic institute

If the student plans to continue with the pregnancy, they should let their academic institute and placement provider know as soon as possible so that support can be provided. Whilst the PT (Personal 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 they feel more comfortable. However, the PT, Programme Leader or Supervisor will need to be informed as, in the event of an examination or other compulsory component being missed they will need to be aware of the reasons for this.

6.2.3 Implications for study

The personal tutor or programme lead will meet with the student to discuss how the pregnancy is likely to impact on their study and complete a Pregnancy Risk Assessment (Appendix B). There may need to be an interruption of studies depending on when the baby is due, and the student together with their PT / Programme Leader / Supervisor will decide whether an interruption is needed and, if so, the time period that this needs to cover.

This decision also needs to take into account the academic requirements of the students' programme. A student with a baby due near to the examination period might require confirmation from their doctor that they are fit to sit exams. Time off might also be needed for medical appointments.

A plan/pregnancy risk assessment should be agreed in writing by the student and the PT/ Programme Leader / Supervisor or other nominated staff member, detailing any special arrangements required during the student's pregnancy, and the agreed timescale for their return to study (Appendix B). A copy of this plan should be given to the student and (with the student's permission) to other relevant members of staff who may require this information. The plan needs to show clearly who the plan is being shared with. If the student continues to study during their pregnancy, they should meet regularly with their PT/ 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. A copy of the plan/pregnancy risk assessment should be sent to the relevant PAD for inclusion on the student's file.

Students should refer to section 6.2.9 for advice regarding **financial considerations**.

6.2.4 Placements and fieldwork e.g. outdoor activities or other trips associated with the programme

Where the student plans or is required, to take part in placements and fieldwork as part of their studies, a risk assessment should be carried out by the academic member of university staff responsible for organising the placement / fieldwork. There may be particular risks associated with any formal placement or given fieldwork activity or additional programme related activity. Students will normally be advised to refrain from taking part in fieldwork / placement after the 7th month of pregnancy. If in doubt of what constitutes fieldwork, student should seek clarification from their tutor.

Academic members of university staff responsible for placement activities should:

- Ensure that placements limit exposure to chemical, physical, microbiological, ergonomic or psychosocial hazards in the workplace;
- Ensure continuity in the educational programme.
- University staff should take the full range of activity into account when conducting the risk assessment including placements, trips, visits, fieldwork in their risk assessment.

Whilst on placement it is a specific requirement of the placement provider to assess risk for

pregnant workers which means that students must inform their placement provider. Continuation on placement is dependent on the outcome of the provider's risk assessment.

The Extenuating Circumstances procedures may be utilised for any student experiencing pregnancy complication and/or pregnancy-related illness whilst on programme. For any other impact on study the student should engage with other appropriate university procedures, for example, intercalation or risk assessment activity where appropriate. If you are an HLA or other work-based programme, then you should share with your employer and make sure you engage in their processes too.

6.2.5 *Study abroad*

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

6.2.6 *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 temporary withdrawal from their course of study, then immigration advice should be sought from ukvicompliance@cumbria.ac.uk.

6.2.7 *Returning from maternity-related absence*

While the length of maternity-related absence will vary, the University strongly recommends that students, as a minimum, take 2 week's absence after the birth of their child. While not compulsory in a campus or home setting, students cannot be on any work placement in the 2 weeks after childbirth and this extends to 4 weeks if on placement to a factory. Although students are not employees, this aligns with employment law as well as Advance HE recommendations. NHS Student Bursaries recommends a minimum of 12 weeks' maternity absence but allows students to return earlier if they have approval from their GP or health worker.

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 in writing a new return date with the student.

Before a student returns, consideration should be given to their requirements on return. The student's study options, and the continued support provided by the University should be discussed with the student in developing their support plan, and can be confirmed with the student prior to their return. Examples of possible support 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. 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;
- Ensuring a smooth return – welcome-back meetings will be organised with PT/ Programme Leader or Supervisor;
- Continuing contact – making clear who the key contact will be for the student in case they encounter any difficulties;

The student should discuss options with their tutor to ensure their progress on programme is supported, and their funding and status on programme are accurately represented, depending on the length of break and the timing within their study pattern. These may include an approved leave of absence, where they plan to return to their cohort and make up any study, or an intercalation where you wish to pause study and return to a later cohort to complete their programme. This discussion should also include the provisional return date and a mapping of any assessment or other arrangements to

support their return to study. Any agreements may be reviewed and amended at any time, ensuring the tutor and student record are kept up to date of any changes. Further details of options are available on the University Taking a Break information pages on MyCumbria [Taking a break, transfers and withdrawals | MyCumbria](#)

This policy is also relevant to Apprentices on University of Cumbria programmes. However, Apprentices are also subject to the Apprenticeship Funding Rules related to Maternity, Paternity and Shared Parental leave as set out by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). These rules also cover the use of Keeping in Touch (KIT) and Shared Parental Leave in Touch (SPLIT) days during maternity/paternity/shared parental leave. The relevant rules are contained in the latest version of the ESFA funding rules on the Government Web site [Apprenticeship funding rules - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) and guidance on the application of these rules will be provided by the Central Apprenticeship Team.

6.2.8 Health and Safety

Pregnancy should not be equated with poor health or disability. 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.

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 pregnancy health and safety assessment can be conducted.

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

- physical activity, including lifting and carrying and challenging outdoor activities;
- 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.

Health and safety measures may need to be put in place in order to protect the student and their unborn baby, and this will be particularly relevant in certain academic departments (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 their academic department know of their pregnancy, a Pregnancy Risk Assessment must be completed by the academic department (see Appendix B). This will identify any risks that may be present which could harm the student or their 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.

6.2.9 Financial Considerations

Undergraduate home students should note that funding will usually be suspended while you are away from your course. You may be able to request discretionary funding from Student Finance England or equivalent organisation. Students should seek advice from their funding organisation, further information can be found [here](#). You may be eligible for Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) or Maternity Allowance (MA), for more information please visit [Gov.uk](#)

The Money Advice Team is available to support students in understanding funding sources and implications on funding when becoming a parent. You can contact the team using [Student Enquiry Point](#).

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

Postgraduate and Research students receiving funding from external bodies should follow the guidance for their scheme or contact their funding body or sponsor for further advice.

Research students funded by the University of Cumbria are entitled to 26 weeks stipend at the rate advertised on the UKRI website (subject to associated annual adjustments) and an additional 13 weeks at the equivalent rate of standard statutory maternity pay.

International students with financial sponsors must contact their sponsors and agree a plan of action (such as deferring study/when to resume study etc.).

International students are unlikely to be able to access any maternity benefits in the UK. The benefit rules are different for EU students and international students, and further advice should be sought from the [UK Council for International Student Affairs](#).

International students may prefer to return home for the duration of their pregnancy. Airlines and transport providers have different rules in relation to the time scale in terms of number of weeks of pregnancy that they will allow people to fly. The student is responsible for checking travel conditions with transport providers.

6.2.10 Accommodation

Students living in University accommodation who become pregnant may find that this is no longer suitable for health and safety reasons. Contact should be made with the relevant accommodation office for advice or [Student Enquiry Point | Student Enquiry Point \(symplicity.com\)](#). The University will endeavor to be as flexible as possible regarding accommodation contracts but each case will need to be considered in terms of the specific individual circumstances.

6.2.11 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 with the express permission of the relevant academic member of staff and only in exceptional circumstances. Students must ensure that 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 [Childcare | MyCumbria](#).

Parents/Guardians remain responsible for any child under 18 that they bring onto University premises and those children should remain under parental supervision at all times. The University provides baby changing facilities on campus.

6.2.12 Breastfeeding/ Chestfeeding

Specific facilities for expressing milk are provided on campus with details located at [Maternity | MyCumbria](#). If alternative arrangements on campus are sought, students should liaise with their tutor in the first instance, who may need to seek further guidance from the Space Utilisation Manager.

6.3 Support for partners who have responsibility for bringing up a child

Any student who is to become a parent and who expects to be responsible for raising the child will be entitled to request time away from their studies. 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 their PT/ Programme Leader or Research 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 in others.

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.

6.4 Support for students adopting a child

Any student adopting or fostering a child should inform their PT/ Programme Leader or Supervisor of their circumstances as soon as possible, in alignment with section 6.2 Guidance for students who become pregnant during their studies. Arrangements can then be made to allow time away from 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. Further advice can be sought via gov.uk

6.5 Complaints

Any student who feels that the University has failed to comply with this policy may raise a complaint under the University's [Complaints Procedure](#). Any problems should be resolved as informally as possible in the first instance. Students in this situation can approach Student Support (part of the Student and Staff Directorate) or the Students' Union if they prefer external, impartial, confidential advice.

6.6 Staff Rights and Responsibilities

6.6.1 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 them to complete their 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;
- Seeking advice on risk assessments from the Health and Safety Manager if required.
- Staff in Student Support are available to discuss the best way to support the continuing study of a pregnant student;
- Appropriate support is available to students through various support services;
- The policy is kept under review and updated as necessary.

6.6.2 Academic institutes must ensure that:

- All students are made aware of the policy and are encouraged to disclose a pregnancy where elements of their programme of study might result in a risk to the health and safety of the student or unborn child so that a pregnancy risk assessment can be completed
- Arrangements for fostering/adoption are recorded eg by a Student Progress Review Action Plan for good practice
- Staff are aware of the policy so that they can respond appropriately when a student discloses their pregnancy or that they are fostering or adopting, and seeks support to continue their programme of study;
- As soon as a student discloses that they are pregnant, a risk assessment is undertaken to ensure that there are no elements of the programme of study and range of associated activities, 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 their programme of study;
- A student may request a member of staff of a specific gender identity, to discuss their support needs;
- The student is given information on other sources of advice/support.

6.6.3 Admissions will ensure that:

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

6.6.4 *Staff members are responsible for:*

- Familiarising themselves with this document and the University's responsibilities towards students who are pregnant or have very young children
- Treating any disclosure of a pregnancy seriously and making students aware of appropriate sources of support;
- Completion of the pregnancy risk assessment (Appendix B) will ensure that the student is clear who the information will be shared with. In rare cases where they might be a significant risk to self or others, university protocols will inform any information sharing beyond the student consent
- Ensuring that 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 Student Support (including mental health and wellbeing support) as appropriate if they are unsure of how best to support the pregnant student.

6.7 Guidance for Staff

6.7.1 *Flexibility*

Staff must ensure that students covered by this policy 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.

6.7.2 *Data sharing*

Information given by students should be shared only as necessary and with sensitivity. Staff should provide impartial advice and not attempt to influence any student's decision. Staff should refer students to specialist support services for eg counselling.

Staff must inform students that the student's PT / Programme Leader or Supervisor, the PT / Programme Leader or Supervisor will be kept informed of the situation.

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 (unless there is serious concern about risk to self or others)

6.7.3 *Meeting*

When a student contacts a member of staff to discuss any circumstances covered by this policy, a response and a meeting should be arranged as soon as possible thereafter. Students can request that a Students' Union caseworker is present at any of these meetings.

6.7.4 *Support Measures*

The views and wishes of the student must be taken into account, rather than applying a standard set of arrangements, and all decisions taken should be based on discussion with the student. Whilst it is recognised that each request must be dealt with on an individual basis, there are a number of measures that could support the student's continuation of study. These include:

- Admissions arrangements including interviewing, assessment and testing are managed by Student and Academic Administration Service;
- 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;

Whilst an appropriate degree of flexibility should be exercised, care must be taken to ensure

that academic standards, including compliance with Professional Statutory Regulatory Bodies (PSRB) are not compromised. A balance must be achieved between ensuring that the student is not disadvantaged, and giving undue special treatment. It is not necessary for the University to grant every request made, although every effort 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 so that it remains clear which arrangements relate to which particular circumstance. This will ensure that these arrangements are in place for the required amount of time and meet the requirements of the different pieces of legislation.

6.7.5 Extenuating circumstances

A student unable to attend an examination due to pregnancy, adoption or fostering would not normally fall within the Extenuating Circumstances process, as this would only be relevant in an unforeseeable situation (for example illness associated with the pregnancy) and occurred shortly before or on the day of the exam.

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, as detailed in section 6.2.4.

If you are a graduate school student you should discuss the impact of the pregnancy, adoption or fostering on your research.

6.7.6 Part-time study

Any requests to transfer to part-time study will be considered where this is possible (although the student should bear in mind the financial implications of this course of action. (Contact money advice team by accessing [Money & Finance | MyCumbria](#)). Staff should refer the student to the useful contacts section and offer support to help the student reintegrate to their studies after any period of prolonged absence.

7. Records Management Statement

The University is committed to complying with the requirements of Data Protection legislation and regulations and any personal data created as part of this policy will be processed in accordance with the University's Data Protection Act procedures. This includes ensuring that data is held securely, is not disclosed unlawfully and is destroyed when no longer needed. The University also aims to ensure that users of this policy are aware of Data Protection, Freedom of Information and Records Management issues associated with this policy.

8. Risk Management Statement

Failure to comply with this policy could lead to claims of discrimination on the grounds of pregnancy and maternity.

This policy mitigates risk(s) [*insert risk code(s) and description(s) from Risk Register*] in the University's Risk Register.

9. Contact Details

For further information regarding any of the issues covered by this policy please contact: Lee McDermott, EDI Officer, lee.mcdermott@cumbria.ac.uk

Appendix A

Legal protection for students during pregnancy and maternity

The Equality Act 2010 considers pregnancy and maternity to be a protected characteristic and prohibits discrimination on these grounds. Under the Act, discrimination can occur against a student because of their pregnancy or because they have given birth if:

- the student is treated unfavourably because of their pregnancy;
- within 26 weeks of the day of giving birth the student is treated unfavourably because they have 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 they are breastfeeding/chestfeeding and the child is less than 26 weeks old; if the child is more than 26 weeks old, unfavourable treatment because of breastfeeding/chestfeeding is likely to constitute sex discrimination.

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 student's partner is treated unfavourably because of their pregnancy or because they have 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

Appendix B

Sample Pregnancy Information and RISK ASSESSMENT FORM – Tutors/Programme Leads, should adapt this to their programme and its related activities.

Name of student	Preferred name	Pronoun	Student number	Contact number	Is the student in UoC halls? If so inform accommodation via step.cumbria.ac.uk

Programme	Year of Study	Campus/ Distance Learning etc.	Lectures and Classes inc timetabled hours in a day	Placements inc any night shifts required and any alternative placement requirement	Exams and assessments – any they will not be able to complete? Alternative required?	Fieldwork/Trips etc inc Residentials/trip/study abroad

What is the student's due date?	How many weeks pregnant is the student at the time of completing this form?	When is the student proposing returning to study? What support will they need?	Does the student require additional advice on the impact of their pregnancy- in relation to any existing or new disability/health conditions - if yes refer the student into step.cumbria.ac.uk	If you feel there might be implications for risk in relation to the student, their unborn child or others with whom we might expect them to work, eg on placement, then please complete and Occupational Health Referral.

Now please complete the risk assessment below:

Individuals considered at significant risk are the pregnant or breastfeeding/chestfeeding person and the unborn or breastfeeding/ chestfeeding child. Risks to others e.g. service users, pupils, visitors etc. are most likely to result from a lack of supervision should the new or expectant mother/birth parent become ill and are already considered in normal operating procedures.

Pregnancy is a dynamic state involving continuous changes and developments, the same working conditions may raise different health and safety issues for different people at different stages, including returning to work after childbirth or whilst breastfeeding /chestfeeding. Some are predictable and apply generally; others depend on individual circumstances and personal medical history.

Hazard	Risk	Control Measures	Notes/ Control measures agreed or indicate "N/A"
Fatigue	Long working or study hours affect different people at different stages in different ways. Susceptibility to fatigue generally increases during pregnancy and in the post-natal period. Lack of nutrition will contribute to fatigue.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure hours, volume, pace etc. of study are not excessive and support is appropriate (buddy, notes for missed lessons, adjust timetable etc.). • Student to make best use of rest periods & inform tutor if poor nutrition (sickness) or lack of sleep may affect safety. 	
Lone working	Pregnant students are more exposed to risk than others when alone if they fall or require urgent medical attention.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student advised they must not work in areas where other people are not present and could see or hear them if in need. If required, the tutor/supervisor should conduct a lone working risk assessment. 	
Work at height	The potential for dizziness makes it hazardous for NEMs to work at height e.g. ladders, platforms, staging.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure pregnant or breastfeeding/chestfeeding students are not exposed to work at height (hanging displays, drama lighting etc.) 	
Bullying, violence, jolts, shocks and vibration to the body	Stress can increase incidences of miscarriage, stillbirth & impair breastfeeding/chestfeeding; exacerbated by: hormonal/ physiological/ psychological changes; financial/emotional insecurity; feeling unwell or peer pressure; anxiety etc. Stillbirth, miscarriage, adoption or neonatal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curricular work eg use of equipment needs to be considered. • Ensure students know how to report harassment and bullying via step@cumbria.ac.uk 	

Hazard	Risk	Control Measures	Notes/ Control measures agreed or indicate "N/A"
	<p>death or trauma such as caesareans also makes them vulnerable.</p> <p>Violence can have similar consequences as well as injury.</p> <p>Regular exposure to shocks (sudden severe blows to the body from contact sports or low frequency vibration) or excessive movement may increase the risk of miscarriage.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alternative lessons/breaks arranged where risks are not tolerable – physical elements of programmes eg in sports/outdoor/performing arts. Avoid the use of equipment generating vibration/jolts If avoidance is not possible, the length of time exposed must be as short as possible. 	
<p>Movements, postures standing and sitting</p>	<p>Fatigue/physical work has been linked to miscarriage, premature birth and low birth weight as well as varicose veins, thrombosis, haemorrhoids, backache, dizziness. Risks depend on: nature, duration & frequency of tasks/ movements; work pace, intensity & variety; work patterns; ergonomic/environmental factors; suitability/ adaptability of work equipment.</p> <p>Hormonal changes during/post pregnancy can affect ligaments, increasing susceptibility to injury.</p> <p>Study spaces with insufficient abdominal room may contribute to strains/sprains.</p> <p>Additional risks may arise following a birth with medical complications e.g. caesarean, deep vein thrombosis etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As with fatigue re: hours, volume, pace of study and related activity etc. Lesson timing creates helpful task breaks and should avoid the need for wandering around during lessons: To be reviewed as pregnancy progresses and the need for toileting or postural relief for backache increases or student experiences sudden need to express milk after childbirth. Study spaces have adequate seating to meet needs with arising issues to be resolved as appropriate. Student to avoid perching, leaning, repeated awkward movements or other poor postural positions especially when seated. 	
<p>Manual handling of loads</p>	<p>Hormonal relaxation of ligaments mean manual handling poses greater risks as pregnancy progresses and for at least 3 months following birth.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students to be advised of potential handling risks (carrying heavy bags/equipment etc) Student to actively avoid handling tasks involving heavy loads, awkward movements or heights and seek appropriate assistance. 	

Hazard	Risk	Control Measures	Notes/ Control measures agreed or indicate "N/A"
Uniform/ personal protective equipment (PPE)	Work equipment, uniform and PPE is not generally designed for use by pregnant women/birth parents and may become uncomfortable and unsafe for use (where equipment does not fit properly, or mobility is impeded)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the need for new or adapted tasks or uniform/ protective equipment is considered and provided for as regularly as necessary. • Priority to be given to controlling risks by avoidance or substitution (changing task or using different equipment) and not PPE alone. 	
Lack of rest or welfare facilities	Rest (physical and mental) is important because fatigue increases during and after pregnancy and may be exacerbated by learning-related factors. Breastfeeding/chestfeeding and expressing is important to the health of mothers/birth parents and babies and requires a clean environment and suitable storage facilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suitable facilities are available where breastfeeding/chestfeeding students can sit, lie down comfortably or express milk in privacy, without disturbance at appropriate intervals. • Facilities exist to enable breastfeeding/chestfeeding as appropriate e.g. clean, secure refrigerated storage; washing, sterilising and receptacle storing facilities etc. 	
Infections, morning sickness, kidney disease and other health conditions	<p>Contracting some common infections can be extremely serious for pregnant/breastfeeding/chestfeeding students</p> <p>Different people experience different symptoms of morning sickness which can last all day and require urgent toilet visits.</p> <p>Pressure on the bladder and other changes in pregnancy as well as increased fluid intake promoting breastfeeding/chestfeeding means more frequent visits to the toilet.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check student is in contact with their GP for pregnancy related advice and guidance. Students should talk to their GP if they come into contact or develop a contagious disease. • Adjustments on a case by case basis. 	
Control of Substances Hazardous to	Lead, mercury, substances in Annex 1 to Directive 90/394/EC; substances labelled from Directive 83/379/EEC or 1999/45/EC; cytotoxic substances;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure an adequate and sufficient COSHH risk assessment is in place. 	

Hazard	Risk	Control Measures	Notes/ Control measures agreed or indicate "N/A"
Health (COSHH)	<p>all have one or more identified risk phrases for hazardous substances affecting NEMs incl.:</p> <p>R40 – limited evidence of a carcinogenic effect</p> <p>R45 – may cause cancer</p> <p>R46 – may cause heritable genetic damage</p> <p>R49 – may cause cancer by inhalation</p> <p>R61 – may cause harm to the unborn child</p> <p>R63 – possible risk of harm to the unborn child</p> <p>R64 – may cause harm to breastfed/chestfeed babies</p> <p>R68 – possible risk of irreversible effects</p> <p>The practical risk they present can only be decided by risk assessment considering the immediate/ cumulative harm, amount, use, frequency, no. exposed etc.</p>		
Extremes of cold or heat	<p>Pregnant people tolerate heat less well and are at risk of fainting and heat stress with less risk after birth, but varying speeds of improvement.</p> <p>Dehydration can impair breastfeeding/chestfeeding.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure reasonable adjustments are considered. 	
Passive smoking and carbon monoxide	<p>Cigarette smoke is mutagenic, carcinogenic and a known risk to pregnancy where the mother/birth parent smokes. Smoke can aggravate asthma; affect heart and lungs and pose a risk to foetal/infant health.</p> <p>Carbon monoxide interferes with the cardiovascular system starving mother/birth parent and baby of oxygen (vehicle engines running in enclosed spaces, science labs possibly etc.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinforce that university inside spaces are non-smoking (including vaping). Smoking shelters are available. • Students should seek advice from GP. 	
Noise	<p>Prolonged exposure to loud noise can lead to increased blood pressure and fatigue and body changes during pregnancy can exacerbate reactions. Prolonged exposure of the foetus may</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure noise levels do not exceed national exposure limits (2 people should be able to hear each other in normal conversation at least 2m apart). 	

Hazard	Risk	Control Measures	Notes/ Control measures agreed or indicate "N/A"
	have an effect on hearing at birth and low frequencies are more harmful. Breastfeeding/chestfeeding parents are not at greater risk.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hearing protection is not an appropriate control measure because it cannot be applied to the foetus. Harmful noise must be eliminated. 	
Ionising Radiation (IR: radioactive sources)	Ionising radiation can cause miscarriage and severe health effects for the mother/birth parent, foetus (or baby via breast/chest milk).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the student is likely to be exposed to X-Ray radiation or ionizing radiation the duration of the exposure limits should be considered. 	
Other	Please use additional columns for any specific risks not covered above		
Student is in halls	The University accommodation officers can conduct risk assessments in relation to halls.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The University has no family accommodation available. 	

Completed by	Student	Programme Lead	Tutor(s)
This checklist and risk assessment will be shared with	Sent to PAD (please confirm the date)	Placement Unit	Other ... please specify names

This pregnancy risk assessment should be reviewed if anything changes in relation to the individual's circumstances.

Appendix C

Advice for Pregnant Students

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

[Pregnancy - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](http://www.nhs.uk)

[Support - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](http://www.nhs.uk)

Advice for Adoption

[Child adoption: Overview - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

[Adopt a child | Barnardo's \(barnardos.org.uk\)](http://barnardos.org.uk)

[Types of adoption | Barnardo's \(barnardos.org.uk\)](http://barnardos.org.uk)

[Adoption UK Charity](http://www.adoptionukcharity.org.uk)

Advice for Fostering

[Becoming a foster parent: Who can foster - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

[Becoming a foster parent: Types of foster care - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

[Help and support for foster parents: Training and development - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

[Foster a child | Barnardo's | Barnardo's \(barnardos.org.uk\)](http://barnardos.org.uk)

[Independent Fostering Agency | Foster Care Services | Fostering UK](http://www.fosteringuk.org)

UNIVERSITY OF CUMBRIA

POLICY DOCUMENT CONTROL SCHEDULE

All University of Cumbria Policies must include a completed Policy Document Control Schedule consisting of the Policy Schedule (see front cover), Review Schedule and Drafting Schedule (see below) which should be completed as appropriate.

REVIEW SCHEDULE				
Review no.	Due date	Reviewed by	Approved by	Completion date
1	Sept 20	Lee McDermott	EDIW Committee	Feb 2020
2	Feb 21	Honor Rhodes Lee McDermott		May 2023
	Sept 26			

DRAFTING SCHEDULE	
Draft no.	Date
<i>E.g. 0.1</i>	
<i>0.2</i>	
<i>0.3</i>	June 19
Final Version	
<i>1.0</i>	Jan 19