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**Originating Directorate:** Student and Academic Services

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# 1. Policy

Pregnancy and maternity are protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010,

**DMU will:**

- Offer students unbiased, non-judgmental support in making decisions about course and placement choices, exams, assessments, student housing and so on.
- Only contact a student who they believe is pregnant and who has not disclosed, if there are genuine concerns about the student's health or safety. DMU staff will avoid causing offence or perceptions of unfair treatment.
- Encourage its staff to signpost students to the appropriate Student Welfare services and/or external agencies as listed in Section 3 of the policy. DMU staff *will not* give advice or guidance on pregnancy or termination unless they are qualified and employed to do so.
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## 2. Pregnancy, Maternity Secondary Carer (Paternity) and Adoption Leave Procedure

### 2.1 Informing the University

Students should contact their faculty nominated Pregnancy, Maternity Secondary Carer (Paternity) and Adoption Leave contact as early as possible so that a health and safety assessment can be conducted. Where a student is unsure whether they will proceed with their pregnancy, it may still be appropriate to conduct a health and safety assessment.

The faculty contact will liaise with the student, a relevant academic (if appropriate) and the Faculty Engagement Officer. This is an opportunity to discuss and action any support requirements and is an opportunity for the faculty contact to conduct a health and safety risk assessment.

The completion of a health and safety risk assessment should take priority. It is the duty of all students to co-operate with the university to enable compliance with health and safety requirements; which are covered in more detail in the [General Regulations and Procedures Affecting Students, Chapter 9](#).

### 2.2 Pregnant Students

Students who believe they are pregnant should be advised to seek medical advice from their General Practice Medical Centre. Staff should also inform students of the welfare resources, money advice and counselling services available from Student and Academic Services and De Montfort Student Union (DSU) if appropriate.

DMU staff may not give advice about continuing or terminating a pregnancy, but should instead signpost students to the internal and external agencies as detailed in Section 3 of this policy.

Staff must ensure a Support Form (Appendix 1) is completed with students to ensure that: study, placement, research, exam and assessment arrangements are considered and put in place. A risk assessment must also be completed to protect the health of the student and the baby both before and, following the birth.

#### Action



## 2.5 Arranging Secondary Carer (Paternity) Leave

The secondary carer may also apply for a reasonable leave of absence, normally no more than two weeks in total, from study or placement. The secondary carer is normally defined as the:

- baby's biological father, or
- civil partner/same sex partner to the mother or, husband or partner
- adoption - Civil partner/same sex partner, husband or partner to the primary carer for adoption.

The secondary carer may only apply for the leave to take time off study/placement to support the mother/primary carer or care for the child.

Faculty staff should discuss and advise the student (secondary carer) on study and placement considerations. Students who are taking Secondary Carer (paternity) leave must complete and return to the faculty the **Secondary Carer (Paternity) Leave form** (Appendix 2).

The faculty contact will write to the student within 28 calendar days confirming the agreed arrangements for study, placement, research, exam and assessment arrangements. Any revision of dates should be notified to the faculty contact as soon as possible.

### Action

- Faculty contact and student to agree study and placement considerations. These arrangements should be confirmed in writing by the faculty.
- Student to complete and return Secondary Carer (Paternity) Leave form (Appendix 2).

## 2.6 Shared Parental Leave

In some circumstances, student parents may wish to share a period of parental leave. If a student wishes to do this it is important that the student discusses any implications with regards their studies with their faculty contact.

It is important that students contact their funding provider to discuss any implications of suspending their studies. DMU's [Student Finance and Welfare team](#) are available for advice and guidance regarding student funding. Students are advised to book an appointment with them via <https://mygateway.dmu.ac.uk>.

## 2.7 Time off for Doctor's, Ante-Natal Care and Pre-Adoption Appointments

The pregnant student is entitled to reasonable time off to attend antenatal care on the advice of a registered medical practitioner, midwife or health visitor. Likewise the student who has pre-adoption appointments is entitled to reasonable time off to attend.

Partners of expectant mothers are entitled to have reasonable time off to accompany them to up to two antenatal appointments.





If the student is still breastfeeding and requires private and safe facilities to express and store breast milk they should contact their faculty contact. Private spaces are available by prior arrangement with the De Montfort Students' Union in the Campus Centre. Faculty contacts should allow some flexibility in break times and study or placement hours to allow students to express milk during study or placement hours.

There are no restrictions on breastfeeding or bottle feeding in public areas, such as the cafés, Food Village, Campus Centre and The Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Leisure Centre.

A fridge is available, by arrangement, in the offices of the Occupational Health and Wellbeing Department for the storage of expressed breast-milk. Students should arrange access via their faculty contact, who will liaise with the Head of Health, Safety and Wellbeing.

### **Action**

- Staff to ensure that Risk Assessment arrangements are in place for pregnant women and new mothers.
- Faculties should identify with the support of the Occupational Health Department if required, areas for breast feeding mothers to express and to store breast milk.

## **2.11 Assessments and Examinations**

Reasonable adjustments should be explored in order that the student can, if necessary,

## 2.12 Students in University Accommodation

The university only offers single occupancy accommodation. Students should seek advice on accommodation, and being released

## **2.15 Keeping in Touch during Maternity or Adoption Leave**

The university may make reasonable contact with the student (and vice-versa) whilst they are on Maternity Leave to discuss a range of issues – e.g. to discuss plans for returning to study or to keep the student informed of important developments with their course or programme of study. Students should consider keeping up with their course emails and with information posted on course web and blackboard sites. The student may wish to discuss arrangements for keeping in touch with their Faculty Engagement Officer prior to the start of their Maternity Leave.

## **2.16 End of Adoption Placement**

Where an adoption placement is ended, then students may wish to renegotiate a return to study date.

## **2.17 Still Births and Miscarriages**

If the student's foetus or baby is miscarried or still born, they are entitled to take sick leave or apply to interrupt their course.

Counselling and advice services are available through Student Welfare and the DSU. See 'Resources List' in Section 3 of this document.

## **2.18 Babies and Children on Campus**

**The following section is taken from the Safety Policy: SP3/1 General Safety Matters, section 2.4.**

While not wishing to be restrictive, it is necessary to take into account the

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### **DSU Advice**

DSU Advice is a **free, confidential and independent** advice service provided by your Students' Union based on the 1st floor of the Campus Centre. The Centre can assist you with **virtually any welfare or course related problem** whilst you are studying at this university. We aim to provide everything from one-off simple advice to long-term support with on-going issues. We also provide advocacy for DMU students both within the university and externally. For example, we can represent you at a DMU disciplinary or academic offences hearing or in court to recover your housing deposit.

[demontfortsu.com/support/advice/](http://demontfortsu.com/support/advice/)

### **Sulets**

Sulets is a student union run lettings agency to help students find suitable, high quality accommodation ranging from self contained studio apartments to 7 bed houses. Sulets charge no admin fees to students.

[sulets.com](http://sulets.com)

## **3.3 External services**

**Family and Childcare Trust**

Family and Childcare Trust aims to make the UK a better place for families, through research, campaigning and information provision, and working with government, employers and parents to reduce pressures on family life.

[familyandchildcaretrust.org](http://familyandchildcaretrust.org)

**Family Planning Association**

The Family Planning Association's mission is to establish a society in which everyone can make informed choices about sex, relationships and reproduction. Its website contains impartial advice on pregnancy, abortion and adoption and also contains a list of useful organisations.

[fpa.org.uk](http://fpa.org.uk)

**Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO) – Travel Advice**

The FCO provide country specific advice for travellers, including safety and security, local laws and customs, and health.

[gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice](http://gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice)

**Health for Under 5s (NHS)**

Website provided by the NHS offering support to parents and carers right through pregnancy to pre-school.

[healthforunder5s.co.uk](http://healthforunder5s.co.uk)

**JAKIN Pregnancy Care & Counselling**

JAKIN Pregnancy Care & Counselling is a Leicester/shire charity supporting those who are facing an unplanned pregnancy or struggling with pregnancy loss.

[jakin-leicester.btck.co.uk/](http://jakin-leicester.btck.co.uk/)

**Miscarriage Association**

The Miscarriage Association offers support and information to anyone affected by the loss of a baby in pregnancy.

[miscarriageassociation.org.uk](http://miscarriageassociation.org.uk)

**NHS – Your Pregnancy and Baby Guide**

This guide produced by the NHS provides advice and guidance on whatever you want to know about being pregnancy or caring for your new baby. The guide includes detailed week-by-week guides and expert videos, tips from other parents and an interactive tool.

[nhs.uk/conditions/pregnancy-and-baby](http://nhs.uk/conditions/pregnancy-and-baby)

**NHS – Fitfortravel**

The NHS provide information on how to stay safe and healthy abroad, including specific advice for pregnant travellers.

[fitfortravel.nhs.uk/advice/general-travel-health-advice/pregnant-travellers](https://fitfortravel.nhs.uk/advice/general-travel-health-advice/pregnant-travellers)

**National Union of Students**

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# Appendix 1

## Student Pregnancy, Maternity or Adoption Support Form

This form aims to guide discussions with students during pregnancy, maternity or adoption. It should be completed and agreed with the student over a period of meetings.

The form should be reviewed at key stages (e.g. 16 weeks pregnant, 24 weeks pregnant, or similar times leading to adoption, and prior to return to study); or at key points of the academic year (e.g. prior to examinations and field trips). If the student's circumstances change, the plan will also need to be reviewed.

[Follow this link to download an MS Word version of this form \(staff log on required\).](#)

(Form developed from ECU (2010) **Student pregnancy and maternity: implications for higher education institutions**)

1. Student contact details	
Full name:	Student Number:
Address:	POST CODE:
Email:	
Telephone numbers	
Mobile:	Other contact number:
2. Emergency Contact details	
Full name:	
Relationship to student:	
Telephone numbers:	
Mobile:	Other contact number:
3. Course details	
Course title:	
Level of study:	
Course contact:	

**6. Preferred communication**

During pregnancy:	
During maternity/adoption related absence?	
On return to study:	

**7. Informing other staff and/or students**

*Who will need to be informed about the student's pregnancy or adoption and when would the student like them to be informed?*

Name and title:	Date:
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**8. Health and safety (Section 2.10)**

*A health and safety risk assessment should consider the following:*

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## 12. Financial support

<b>17. Accommodation (Section 2.12)</b>	
Does the student intend to move to alternative accommodation?	
If yes, when does the student intend to move?	
Has the student notified their accommodation provider so that any necessary health and safety/risk assessment can take place?	
Is the student aware of where to receive advice on alternative accommodation options and terminating existing accommodation contracts?	
<b>18. Return to Study</b>	
What support arrangements are taking place during the students return to study?	
<b>19. Further Information or comments</b>	
Any other information or comments:	

<b>Signatures</b>	
<b>Agreed by staff member</b>	
Name	
Title	
Signature	
Date	
<b>Agreed by student</b>	
Name	
By signing below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I give explicit consent for the content of this form to be shared with other DMU staff/departments as outlined in this form, i.e. Programme teams and Student and Academic Services. I understand that I may withdraw this consent at any time.</li> <li>I agree to inform the university of any changes to my circumstances so that this form may be reviewed.</li> </ul>	
Signature	
Date	
Plan to be reviewed on	

## Appendix 2

### Secondary Carer (Paternity) Leave Form

Please complete this form and return it to your faculty contact as soon as possible. If you have any queries about your Secondary Carer or Paternity Leave rights then please do not hesitate to contact your faculty contact.

<b>Name</b>	
<b>Faculty/Department</b>	
<b>Course</b>	
<b>Year</b>	
<b>The baby is due on</b>	Date:
<b>If the baby has been born, please enter the actual date of birth</b>	Date:

Please complete the following section of this form:

I would like Paternity Leave to start on	Date:
I want to be away from study or placement for one or two weeks (please specify)	

#### Father/Partner's declaration

I declare that:

- I am
  - The baby's biological father. Or
  - Civil partner/same sex partner to the mother or, husband or partner
  - Adoption - Civil partner/same sex partner, husband or partner to the primary carer for adoption.
- I have responsibility for the child's upbringing.
- I will take time off study/placement to support the mother/primary carer or care for the child.

Father/Partner signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

#### Mother/Adopter's declaration

I declare the information provided in this form is correct.

Mother/Adopter signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_