

Student Maternity and Family Leave Policy



THE UNIVERSITY
of EDINBURGH

Purpose of Policy

To provide flexibility for students to ensure that they are not disadvantaged in their studies due to pregnancy or adoption of a child.

Overview

The policy provides guidance on matters relating to students who become pregnant, have partners (including same sex partners) who are to become parents and students who are adopting a child.

Scope: Mandatory Policy

The policy applies to:

- Any student who becomes pregnant during her studies;
- Any student who is to become a father during his studies;
- Any student who is the partner of a student who is pregnant (including a same sex partner); and
- Any student becoming a parent through adoption of a child.

Contact Officer

For specific cases please contact your
School Offices for information
Academic Services: Stuart Fitzpatrick

Academic
Policy
Officer

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Document control

Dates	Approved: 25.04.13	Starts: 01.06.13	Equality impact assessment: 13.6.13	Amendments: n/a	Next Review: 2016/17
Approving authority	Curriculum and Student Progression Committee (CSPC)				
Consultation undertaken	Curriculum and Student Progression Committee (CSPC)				
Section responsible for policy maintenance & review	Academic Services				
Related policies, procedures, guidelines & regulations	N/A				
UK Quality Code	N/A				
Policies superseded by this policy	Maternity Leave policy for Postgraduate Students 2005				
Alternative format	If you require this document in an alternative format please email Academic.Services@ed.ac.uk or telephone 0131 650 2138.				
Keywords	Student pregnancy, student maternity leave, adoption				

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- 1 The University is committed to providing adjustments to students to ensure that they are not disadvantaged in their studies due to pregnancy or adoption of a child.

Students to become parents

- 2 Any student who has their pregnancy confirmed by a GP, is to become a father, or is to adopt a child, is encouraged to report this to their Personal Tutor, Postgraduate Director, Research Supervisor or person nominated by their School so that they can provide appropriate academic advice.
- 3 Please note: a student who is undertaking a programme of postgraduate study via a Postgraduate Sponsor has the sole responsibility to inform their Postgraduate Sponsor of any change of circumstance.

Implications for programme of study

- 4 The student will meet with their Personal Tutor, Postgraduate Director, Research Supervisor or person nominated by their School where the following issues should be addressed:
 - Whether an interruption of study will be required and, if so, for how long (an interruption would not normally exceed one academic year);
 - If assessments are pending, whether the student is fit to attempt the assessments, and;
 - Any time-off or possible modifications to attendance that might be required so that the student can attend medical appointments.
- 5 A written record of the agreed adjustments should be produced and retained by the Personal Tutor, student and the relevant administrator with responsibility for the student's programme of study.
- 6 Please note – Personal Tutors would not be responsible for granting interruption of study to Postgraduate Students. In these instances, the normal interruption of studies procedure for Postgraduate Students should be followed.

Study abroad

- 7 Where a student has their pregnancy confirmed whilst studying abroad, they are encouraged to contact their Personal Tutor, Postgraduate Director, Research Supervisor or person nominated by their School to ensure that adequate steps are taken to make necessary adjustments.

Resumption of studies

- 8 Students should not return to the University within two weeks of the birth of their child, as outlined in s.8(b) of the '*Maternity and Parental Leave (etc) Regulations 1999*'.
www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/1999/3312/contents/made
- 9 The student will be responsible for confirming that they are ready to resume their studies at the end of their agreed period of interruption. They should inform their Personal Tutor and the relevant administrator that they are to return so that the appropriate arrangements can be made in terms of course enrolments, etc. Directly before, or as soon as practical after their return, the student should meet with their Personal Tutor to ensure that any necessary adjustments are made to ensure a smooth return to their programme of study. Students are reminded that it is not permitted to bring children into classes.



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- 10 Details of childcare facilities available at the University are as follows:
www.ed.ac.uk/studying/undergraduate/facilities/childcare
- 11 There are also numerous council approved nurseries within the city of Edinburgh. Please consult www.scottishchildcare.gov.uk/ for more information.

Health and Safety

- 12 There are health and safety issues that the University must take into consideration in order to protect the mother and unborn baby:
- The Personal Tutor, Postgraduate Director, Research Supervisor or person nominated by School must ensure that the relevant health and safety staff within the School/College are informed so that, where necessary, a risk assessment can be carried out;
 - If the student is resident in University accommodation whilst pregnant, in order for appropriate adjustments to be made, informing Accommodation Services of their pregnancy can ensure that the accommodation provided to the student is appropriate;
 - Accommodation Services consider a student who has given birth to a child to have 'Exceptional Circumstances', and as such would seek to re-house a student staying in unsuitable University accommodation to a more suitable arrangement. Should this prove impossible, the student will be released from lease and will not incur any penalties for non-fulfilment of the term of the lease, in order that the student may move to or seek other more suitable accommodation.
 - If the student requires, the Personal Tutor, Postgraduate Supervisor or person nominated by their school will advise on appropriate adjustments and provisions to allow the student to express milk. A female may need to express milk in the period after childbirth if her breasts become overfull/engorged. As such, the University should provide the student with appropriate space to do so.
 - The student must not return to the University within two weeks of giving birth, as outlined in s.8(b) of the '*Maternity and Parental Leave (etc) Regulations 1999*'.
www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/1999/3312/contents/made

Finance

- 13 Undergraduate students in receipt of funding from either the Student Awards Agency for Scotland or the Student Loans Company should contact their funding body for advice on fee and loan related issues.
- Student Awards Agency for Scotland (SAAS): www.saas.gov.uk/
 - Student Loans Company (SLC): www.slc.co.uk/
 - The Advice Place can provide advice to students on a number of finance related issues: www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/advice/
- 14 Postgraduate taught and research students who are in receipt of funding from external bodies should contact them for advice on funding related issues.
- 15 Childcare funds are available for undergraduate students using registered childcare. More information can be found at:
www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/student-funding/financial-support/students-children/childcare-fund
Please note that Childcare fund awards are not available to postgraduate students.



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- 16 Lone Parents Grant - Undergraduate students from Scotland who are lone parents with at least one dependent child can apply to the Students Awards Agency for Scotland (SAAS) for the Lone Parents' Grant. More information is available from www.saas.gov.uk/.
- 17 Lone Parents Childcare Grant - In addition to the Lone Parents Grant, undergraduate students can receive financial assistance for formal childcare costs such as child minders, after school clubs and providers of day care and pre-school education through the Lone Parents Childcare Grant. More information is available via email to financial.aid@ed.ac.uk.
- 18 Day Nursery Bursaries - Bursaries are available to UK undergraduate students to cover the costs of formal childcare at the University's Day Nursery. Up to ten bursaries are available to UK undergraduate students who have been accepted at the University of Edinburgh on a full-time undergraduate degree programme in any subject offered by the University. UK Undergraduate students who are currently enrolled at the University may also apply. The bursaries will have a value of up to the full cost of nursery provision during semester time. Bursaries will be tenable for one academic session. More information is available via email to financial.aid@ed.ac.uk
- 19 It is recommended that any student taking an interruption of study should contact Student Administration about the possible effect on the fees to be charged when study resumes. International students studying at the institution under Tier 4 regulations are also recommended to speak with an immigration adviser about the implications to their UK visa. Further information regarding Visas can be found in section 7 below.
www.ed.ac.uk/student-administration

Visa issues

- 20 Students studying at Edinburgh under University Tier 4 visa sponsorship will need to consider the length of maternity/paternity/adoption leave depending upon:
 - The timing of any interruption of studies;
 - The due date;
 - Academic course type and course dates;
 - The decision the student has made about progressing with their studies after the birth of the child.
- 21 If a student on a Tier 4 Visa takes an interruption of more than 60 days, the University is required to report this to the relevant authority and will not be able to sponsor them to remain in the UK. The student would therefore need to make arrangements to return home. If the student is satisfied to take a period of interruption lasting less than 60 days, this could be permissible provided that the student re-engages with their course before the end of the 60 day period. If the student requires longer than 60 days from the outset, this has to be noted to the relevant authority and our sponsoring relationship with the student would end, the student would be required to leave the UK and sponsorship could only recommence at the point that they are ready to begin their studies again.
- 22 The visa implications of a maternity/paternity/adoption leave should be considered at the earliest possible opportunity and it is vital therefore that the International Office are included in discussions relating to any absence due to pregnancy. They can be contacted at immigration@ed.ac.uk
www.ed.ac.uk/international-office/immigration

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Sources of advice for students

23 The following links may provide useful information.

- University Health Service - www.health-service.ed.ac.uk/
- The Advice Place (Advice Places are located at the Students' Association in Bristo Square and KB House, Kings Buildings, West Mains Road): www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/advice/
- International Office: www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/international-office
- International Student Centre: www.ed.ac.uk/studying/international/student-life/isc
- Childcare Facilities at the University of Edinburgh:
www.ed.ac.uk/studying/undergraduate/facilities/childcare
- Scholarships and Student Funding Services: www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/student-funding/home
- NHS (National Health Service) Scotland: www.nhsscotland.com/
- NHS 24, a 24 hour contact and advisory service – 08454 24 24 24

25 April 2013