

Dixons Sixth Form Academy

Student Pregnancy, Maternity/Paternity Policy and Procedure inc. Risk Assessment



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1. Introduction

It is the policy of Dixons Sixth Form Academy to provide a safe and healthy working environment for all staff and students, including particular measures to protect the health and safety of those who are pregnant, have recently given birth or who are breastfeeding. This Policy has been written to give guidance on how the college will achieve this.

2. Health and Safety

The college is committed to providing a safe and healthy working environment for all students and to protect those who are pregnant, have recently given birth or who are breastfeeding. The college will fulfil its obligations by carrying out a risk assessment for such students and by putting appropriate measures in place to protect their health and that of their unborn child(ren).

The legislation pertaining to this is The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1999) which puts a specific responsibility on employers to assess and control risks on new and expectant mothers. The workplace Health and Safety Welfare at Work Regulations (1992) states that adequate facilities must be made available so that the pregnant woman has somewhere to sit and rest and also express milk.

The Sex Discrimination Act (1975) also applies, as discrimination on grounds of pregnancy (including a failure to conduct a risk assessment under health and safety regulations) will be considered as unlawful sex discrimination.

Expectant mothers should be aware that the college is not legally obliged to implement all legislative issues that relate to the pregnancy until they have been informed in writing that an individual is pregnant. However, regardless of this, the college appreciates that many women prefer not to formally inform the college (in writing) until later in their pregnancy.

The college will fulfil its obligations by carrying out a risk assessment for such students and by putting appropriate measures in place to protect their health and that of their unborn child/ren.

Pregnancy and maternity are protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010, discrimination on these grounds is strictly prohibited. The College and its staff must ensure that all students/applicants who are pregnant, on maternity leave or breastfeeding will not be discriminated against or treated unfavourably because of: their pregnancy, the termination of a pregnancy, breast-feeding, maternity leave or any relevant reason connected to these. The college must not discriminate against students in admissions or any part of the educational experience, or in the offer or delivery of other services provided by the college. The college will provide support to students who are about to become parents, this policy is designed to assist and help them understand their rights and processes for arranging Maternity and Secondary Carer (Paternity) Leave. The college recognises the important part that secondary carers play in caring for a newborn child. The college also recognises that individuals who are a partner of a woman who is pregnant or has given birth should not be treated unfavourably.



3. Procedure

3.1 Notification

Students should contact their progress tutor early as possible so that a health and safety assessment can be conducted, particularly if there may be particular hazards associated with their courses. This is most likely to be an issue for students in areas such as Drama, Art and Design and the science subjects where there may be a particular chemical or physical hazard.

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 progress tutor will liaise with the Vice Principal for Progress. This is an opportunity to discuss and action any support requirements and is an opportunity for the Pregnancy and Maternity Form (Appendix 1) and health and safety risk assessment form (Appendix 2) to be completed. The completion of a health and safety risk assessment should take priority. It is the duty of all students to co-operate with Dixons Sixth Form Academy to enable compliance with health and safety requirements. (Please note the first 12 weeks of pregnancy are an important time).

3.2 Risk Assessment

To facilitate the process of risk assessment, students are encouraged to look at the risk assessment with the VP to identify any hazards that may apply to them (Appendix 3).

The risk assessment should be completed as soon as reasonably practicable to identify any particular risks (e.g. regarding exposure to toxic chemicals, physical exertion, stress etc.), control measures can then be implemented.

Control measures may involve making temporary changes to study arrangements. Appendix 3 gives examples of the possible hazards and changes that may be introduced to mitigate the risk. The Risk assessment should be reviewed regularly throughout the pregnancy and updates recorded.

4. Confidentiality

The confidentiality of a woman's pregnancy means the college will not make it known to others that she is pregnant if she does not wish it to be known, or does not consent to it.

There may be exceptional circumstances where there is a significant risk to the health and safety of the new or expectant mother or her children where limited exposure may be necessary although this will be done with full consultation with the new or expectant mother. If new or expectant mothers are concerned about confidentiality they should raise this with their Progress Tutor.

5. Pregnant Students

Students who believe they are pregnant should be advised to seek medical advice from their General Practice Medical Centre. Staff may not give advice about continuing or terminating a pregnancy, but should instead signpost students to the external agencies as detailed in Appendix 4 of this policy. The VP must ensure a Support Form (Appendix 1) is completed with students to ensure that: study and assessment arrangements are considered and put in place. A risk assessment (Appendix 2) must also be completed to protect the health of the student and the baby both before and following the birth.

If another member of staff in the college is informed that a student is pregnant, the member of staff must inform the VP, who will then complete the Support Form (Appendix 1) and the Health and Safety Risk Assessment (Appendix 2).



6. Maternity Leave

The college recommends that a pregnant student takes a minimum of two weeks Maternity Leave absence. Students who experience complications, for example Caesarean section or who are breast feeding, should seek advice and guidance on returning to study from their health care provider.

A student may also apply to suspend their study and join the course in a subsequent year, if the student will return to college and complete their course prior to their 20th birthday. This request must be made in writing to the VP of the college by the 26th week of pregnancy. The VP will consider the request and will confirm the decision made in writing within two weeks of receiving the request.

7. Time off for Doctor's and Ante-Natal Care 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. Partners of expectant mothers are entitled to have reasonable time off to accompany them to up to two antenatal appointments.

Students should discuss time off with their VP in advance of such appointments and will be required to provide evidence. They should try wherever possible to arrange appointments outside of programmed teaching or at the start or the end of the college day.

8. Assessments and Examinations

Reasonable adjustments should be explored in order that the student can, if necessary, complete the requirements of their course before taking Maternity Leave. If a student is due to give birth near to or during assessment deadlines or the examination period, and wishes to complete their assessed work or sit their examinations, they should not normally be prevented from doing so. Students should liaise with their Progress Tutor to discuss any individual examination requirements as early as possible. The Progress Tutor should notify the Exams Manager and VP of any particular arrangements or special conditions the student requires. If in the course of an examination the student experiences significant pregnancy related problems, the college will follow the examinations extenuating circumstances procedures.

9. Welfare Facilities

If the mother on her return to her studies wishes to express milk, suitable arrangements will be made to support this.

10. Keeping in Touch during Maternity Leave

The college 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. The student may wish to discuss arrangements for keeping in touch with their progress tutor prior to the start of their Maternity Leave.

11. 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. Support and advice services are available through the college by contacting their Progress Tutor. The student will also be directed to external support services.



12. 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. 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

The secondary carer may only apply for the leave to take time off study to support the mother/primary carer or care for the child. Progress Tutors should discuss and advise the student (secondary carer) on study considerations. Students who are taking Secondary Carer (paternity) leave must complete and return to their progress tutor the Secondary Carer (Paternity) Leave form (Appendix 5). Any revision of dates should be notified to the tutor as soon as possible.



Appendix 1 - Pregnancy and maternity support form

This form aims to guide discussions with students during pregnancy and maternity. 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 and prior to return to study); or at key points of the academic year (e.g. prior to examinations). If the student's circumstances change, the plan will also need to be reviewed.

1. Student Contact Details:	
Full Name:	Student Number:
Address:	POST CODE:
Email:	
Mobile:	
2. Emergency Contact details	
Full name:	
Relationship to student:	
Mobile:	
3. Key dates	
Students due date:	
Current amount of weeks pregnant:	
4. Health and Safety Risk Assessment	
Has a risk assessment taken place?	
Where changes are required, have these been communicated with the relevant staff members?	
5. Pregnancy related absence	
Will the dates or times of antenatal appointments affect the student's study?	

Have you discussed any pregnancy related illness that has affected the students ability to undertake their course?	
If yes to either of the above, what arrangements/options have been suggested and what are the next steps to arrange them?	
6. Examinations and assessments	
Will the due date affect any completion of examinations or assessments?	
If yes, what arrangements/options have been suggested, what are the next steps to arrange them and who is responsible for these actions?	
Has contact been made with the Exams Manager and details passed	
7. Maternity leave (student should provide information in writing at least 15 weeks before their due date)	
How much maternity leave does the student intend to take?	
When does the student intend to start maternity leave?	
When does the student intend to return from maternity leave?	
8. Return to Study	
<p>Are you planning to return to your studies within 6 months of the birth of your child/children?</p> <p>(Note-further risk assessment is required for women who return to college within 6 months of the baby being born or if they return whilst still breast feeding)</p>	
What support arrangements are taking place during the students return to study?	
9. Further information or comments	

Signatures	
Name	
Title	
Signature	
Date	
Agreed by student	
Name	
<p>By signing below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I give explicit consent for the content of this form to be shared with other relevant staff/departments as outlined in this form, i.e Senior VP, Vice Principal, Operations Manager and Exams Manager. I understand that I may withdraw this consent at any time. • I agree to inform the college of any changes to my circumstances so that this form may be reviewed. 	
Signature	
Date	
Plan to be reviewed on	

New and Expectant Mothers Risk

Assessment Checklist

To be completed by the Line Manager when informed that a student is pregnant, has given birth within the last 6 months, or is breastfeeding.

You should complete this assessment together with the student. You will need to review your assessment regularly as the risks may change over the course of time.

If you have any problems in identifying the hazards or deciding on the action that you need to take, contact Kirsty Dwyer (Operations Manager).

Student Name	
Tutor Group	
Staff Member completing Risk Assessment	
Date of Assessment	
Agencies Involved	
Student's Views	

1. PHYSICAL RISKS

1.1 Movement/Posture	Is there a risk?	
Description of risks and action to be taken:	Yes	No
•		

1.2 Manual Handling	Is there a risk?	
Description of risks and action to be taken:	Yes	No

1.3 Shocks, Jolts or Vibrations	Is there a risk?	
Description of risks and action to be taken:	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

1.4 Noise	Is there a risk?	
Description of risks and action to be taken:	Yes	No

1.5 Ionising Radiation	Is there a risk?	
Description of risks and action to be taken:	Yes	No

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2. CHEMICAL RISKS (Science Practical)

2.1 Chemical Risks	Is there a risk?	
Description of risks and action to be taken:	Yes	No
•		

3. LEARNING CONDITIONS

3.1 Facilities for rest, hygiene and storage of breast milk	Is there a risk?	
Description of risks and action to be taken:	Yes	No
•		

3.2 Mental & physical fatigue	Is there a risk?	
Description of risks and action to be taken:	Yes	No
•		

3.4 Study Stress	Is there a risk?	
Description of risks and action to be taken:	Yes	No

3.5 Extremes of Temperature	Is there a risk?	
Description of risks and action to be taken:	Yes	No
•		

3.8 Violence	Is there a risk?	
Description of risks and action to be taken:	Yes	No

3.9 Personal Protective Equipment	Is there a risk?	
Description of risks and action to be taken:	Yes	No
•		

3.10 Meal Breaks	Is there a risk?	
Description of risks and action to be taken:	Yes	No
Description of risks and action to be taken: •		

4. PHYSIOLOGICAL RISKS

4.1 Physiological Risks	Is there a risk?
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Description of risks and action to be taken:	Yes	No
•		

5. ANY OTHER RISKS NOT IDENTIFIED ABOVE

5.1 Any Other Risks Not Identified Above	Is there a risk?	
Description of risks and action to be taken:	Yes	No

Member of staff completing Risk Assessment signature:	
Student signature:	
Parent/Carer Signature:	
Date:	
Copy Forwarded to Operations Manager (Date)	

Appendix 3 Health & Safety Risk Assessment Guidance Notes

Does your studies involve any of the following?	Nature of risk in pregnancy	Control measures to consider
Work with Chemicals	Some chemicals are specifically forbidden to use when pregnant or breast feeding	For low risk chemicals such as disinfectants used by cleaners, the risk is relatively low and usual control measures like wearing gloves will be adequate. If more toxic substances are involved (e.g. in the chemistry department), consider referral to H&S.
Use of protective clothing or uniform	Clothing may be hot or cumbersome and increase fatigue. Clothing may fit badly as shape changes in later pregnancy.	Consider whether clothing is comfortable and appropriate, provide alternative style if necessary. Consider redeployment if suitable clothing cannot be provided.
Any exposure to radiation		Refer to H&S
Sitting or standing for long periods	Prolonged sitting increases the risk of back pain. Prolonged standing increases the risk of back pain, tiredness and varicose veins.	Consider additional breaks, regular short walks, provision of a chair or stool if appropriate.
Repeated bending or stretching	This may increase the risk of back pain, especially in later pregnancy.	Consider additional breaks. Refer to H&S if a particular problem.
Any lifting or carrying	The risk of back pain is increased during pregnancy due to softening of the ligaments. This is an issue right from the beginning of pregnancy. In later pregnancy, the risks are increased due to the changed posture.	

Working alone for long periods	Possible increase in risk of ill-health requiring assistance	Review usual lone working policies; consider additional means for raising assistance if needed.
Working in extremes of temperature	Fatigue may be an issue, also risk of increased blood pressure. This may be an issue even in ordinary offices in particular hot weather.	Consider extra breaks in a cooler space if appropriate, ensure drinking water is available. Consider alternative duties if severe.
Exposure to loud noise	Prolonged loud noise may increase blood pressure	Refer to H&S if exposed to noise which makes conversation difficult at a distance of 2m.
Working with computers	Possible posture problems if sitting for long periods. Later in pregnancy physical size might be a problem.	Train in DSE, take regular breaks.
Work on wet and slippery surfaces	The likelihood of falling may be higher especially in later pregnancy when the body shape changes. Falling carries a risk to mother and baby	Implement usual good practices to minimise slipping risks (e.g. clear signage, regular cleaning of wet areas). Consider referral to H&S if the risk is very high.
Work without good access to toilet and rest facilities	More frequent toilet breaks may be required during pregnancy. Fatigue may be an issue in pregnancy.	Consider redeployment if adequate toilet facilities are not available, ensure rest time is built into schedules.
Extensive travelling to college	Fatigue may be an issue, driving might be difficult in very late pregnancy due to the size of the bump.	Ensure rest time is built into schedule, consider whether travel is appropriate.
Long working hours	Fatigue may be an issue	Review working hours if causes a significant problem.
Working in confined spaces	Work in small areas may increase the risk of musculoskeletal problems, particular in later pregnancy when the body shape changes.	Ensure appropriate chair, desk and equipment is provided for students in all work areas.

Dance, Drama or PE	This may increase the risk of back pain, especially in later pregnancy. Excessive fast movements may cause miscarriage	Consider additional breaks. Consult with the teacher to reduce the risks. Refer to H&S if a particular problem.
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Appendix 4 External Support Services

Direct Gov

Direct Gov is the UK government's website direct.gov.uk. It provides information on health, care and benefits during pregnancy; benefits for parents and information on childcare providers in your local area which can be found at;
gov.uk/find-registeredchildminder

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 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

Miscarriage Association

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

National Union of Students

Many student unions provide impartial advice and free pregnancy testing kits for students.
nus.org.uk

SANDS

The still birth and neonatal death charity – provides support to anyone affected by the loss of a baby and conducts research into the causes of still and neonatal death.

uk-sands.org



Appendix 5 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.

Name:
Student Number:
Tutor:
Expected Date of arrival:
If the baby has been born, please enter the actual date of birth:

Please complete the following section of this form:

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

Father/Partner's declaration I declare that:

- I am the baby's biological father.
- I have responsibility for the child's upbringing.
- I will take time off study to support the mother/primary carer or care for the child.

Father/Partner signature: Date:.....

Tutor Signature:..... Date:.....