

Pregnant Workers Risk Assessment (including students)				
Policy...	Code of Practice...	Guidance...	Procedure✓	
Organisation-wide✓		Local...		
Approved by the University Health & Safety Committee				
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Standard 3 year review✓ Changes in practice and/or legislation... New policy document...				

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## Appendix 1 Pregnant workers Risk Assessment Form

### 1. Introduction

Employers are responsible for providing a safe working environment while effectively managing risks to the health and safety of all workers, including women of a childbearing age.

You must carry out an [individual risk assessment](#) for pregnant workers and new mothers. This applies to workers who:

- are pregnant
- have given birth, or had a stillbirth, in the last 6 months
- are currently breastfeeding

Some [working conditions](#) and processes can potentially harm them and/or their child so you must assess and control the risks posed in each case.

This procedure applies to all new and expectant mothers. It's important for employers to support them all equally. The legal protections outlined also apply to some transgender men, non-binary people and people with variations in sex characteristics, or who are intersex.

Once your worker has informed you in writing that they are pregnant, you must complete an individual risk assessment and make any necessary changes to support them.

If you employ [gig economy, agency or temporary workers](#) who are pregnant workers or new mothers, you will have duties under health and safety law. For health and safety purposes, they should be treated no differently to other workers.

It is the policy of Brunel University London (Brunel) to provide a safe and healthy environment for all staff and students, including measures to protect the health and safety of those who are pregnant, have recently given birth or are breastfeeding. Brunel will fulfil its obligations by carrying out risk assessment for such staff and by putting appropriate measures in place to protect their health and that of their unborn child (ren).

This procedure also covers students (undergraduate or postgraduate) who become pregnant during their studies. Although there is no specific health and safety requirement to risk assess in these cases there is a duty of care not to expose them to undue risk.

## **2 Scope**

This procedure provides the framework of how Brunel will discharge its responsibilities with regards to pregnant staff and students, and will apply to those staff and students of Brunel.

### **2. Roles and Responsibilities**

Staff and students should be encouraged to notify Brunel, as outlined below, as early as possible of their pregnancy so that a risk assessment can be conducted and any potential harm to your child/children can be assessed and managed.

#### **2.1 Staff**

It is the responsibility of staff to notify both their line manager and Human Resources as soon as they become aware of their pregnancy. Further details regarding staffing matters and pregnancy can be found in section 7 of the [Maternity Leave Policy and Procedure](#).

#### **2.2 Line Managers/Supervisors**

Line managers and/or supervisors shall arrange for the pregnancy risk assessment to be carried out in discussion with the individual, and if required HR, the Health, Safety and Environment Team and/or Occupational Health.

#### **2.3 Students /Academic Supervisor/ Tutor/ Student Services**

It is the responsibility of student to alert Brunel to the fact of their pregnancy as soon as possible, particularly if there may be hazards associated with their course. This is most likely to be an issue for students in areas such as Engineering and Design, Health and Social Sciences and Sport and

Education where there maybe particular chemical or physical hazards – though not exclusively and students should seek advice from the [Student Services Team](#).

Students should alert either their personal tutor and/or supervisor, who must then carry out a pregnancy risk assessment, in discussion with the individual, and where relevant/necessary Student Services and/or the Health, Safety and Environment Team.

Academic Registry, Student Services and Student Living will need to be notified to discuss support issues relating to sitting exams, potential impact on performance and Halls tenancy agreements. In addition, notify Professional Development Centre regarding Work Placements to make suitable and sufficient arrangements to protect the individual and unborn child (ren).

### **3 Risk Assessment**

The Health and Safety Executive require that the workplace risk assessment must specifically consider any risks to the health and safety of a pregnant worker, or that of the baby. The risk assessment form covers possible risks and will allow identification of any areas of concern, regarding staff and students and appropriate measures to be put in place protect their health and that of their unborn child (ren). Further information and FAQ's can be found @ <http://www.hse.gov.uk/mothers/index.htm>

#### **Common risks to consider**

Some of the most common risks from working conditions for pregnant workers and new mothers can be seen below. It is not a complete list – you must think about the specific hazards and controls for your area.

#### **Posture and position**

Pregnant workers and new mothers could be more prone to injury, which may not become apparent until after birth. Postural problems can occur at different stages of pregnancy, and on returning to work, depending on the individual and their working conditions.

You should make sure pregnant workers and new mothers are not:

- sitting or standing for long periods
- lifting or carrying heavy loads
- using a workstation that causes posture issues

A [DSE](#) Assessment should be undertaken.

#### **Working conditions**

Long hours, shift work and night work can have a significant effect on the health of pregnant workers, new mothers and their children. They may also be particularly vulnerable to work-related stressors. Not all workers will be affected in the same way, but mental and physical fatigue generally increase during pregnancy and following birth.

You should assess the risks posed by:

- [work-related stress](#)
- [temperature](#)
- [noise](#)

### **Risk of physical injury**

Some work carries the risk of physical injury, and the consequences for pregnant workers and new mothers can be more serious. Check whether you need to provide extra control measures, for example to protect them when:

- [working at height](#)
- [working alone](#)
- [at risk of work-related violence](#)
- [exposed to vibration](#)

### **Exposure to harmful substances**

Many chemical and biological agents can cause harm to pregnant workers or new mothers. They can also be passed on to their child during pregnancy or breastfeeding.

These could include:

- [lead](#)
- [radioactive material](#)
- [toxic chemicals like mercury and pesticides](#)
- [infectious diseases](#)
- [antimitotic \(cytotoxic\) drugs](#)

There is general advice relating to [harmful substances](#).

### **Personal protective equipment**

Personal protective equipment (PPE) is often not designed for pregnant workers.

Make sure any PPE you provide will be safe and comfortable for them to use, especially as their pregnancy progresses. Consider [measures to take if the PPE is no longer suitable](#), such as changing their work activity.

If in doubt about applying the information in section 3 then please contact [healthandsafety@brunel.ac.uk](mailto:healthandsafety@brunel.ac.uk) for advice.

## **4 Rest and breastfeeding at work**

Pregnant workers and breastfeeding mothers are entitled to more frequent rest breaks. You should talk to them so you can agree the timing and frequency.

You must provide a suitable area where they can rest. It should:

- include somewhere to lie down if necessary
- be hygienic and private so they can express milk if they choose to – toilets are not a suitable place for this
- include somewhere to store their milk, for example a fridge

There is advice from Acas on [accommodating breastfeeding employees in the workplace](#).

Some work presents an extra risk for breastfeeding mothers and their children. This includes [working conditions](#) that could expose them to organic mercury, radioactive material or lead. You need to consider these risks in your worker's [individual risk assessment](#) for as long as they wish to continue breastfeeding.

## **5 Monitoring**

As part of the risk assessment, it is advised that the individual and the assessment is reviewed every 4 weeks as a minimum to keep the control measures, if any, under review as the pregnancy progresses.

Any concerns during the monitoring period shall be reported to Human Resources, Student Services and/or the Health, Safety and Environment Team for their advice and guidance.

## **6 Further Guidance**

[Protecting pregnant workers and new mothers - HSE](#)

[Carers, parents and flexible working guide \(brunel.ac.uk\)](#)

**Appendix 1**
**Pregnancy Risk Assessment Form**

**To be completed by the Individual with either the Line Manager/ Personal Tutor or Supervisor and the returned to Human Resources or Student Services as appropriate**

 College, Institute or Professional Service 

Employee and/or students Name:

Date of Birth:

Job title/Course:

Form Completed by:

Line Manager and/or Tutor/Supervisors

Hazard	Risk		Possible solution <i>(Please edit according to your specific situation – the items in green are merely suggestions)</i>
	Yes	No	
1. Does the work or study involve: Reaching? Stretching? Repetitive Twisting? Lifting/carrying loads?			<i>Can a mechanical aid be used?</i> <i>Can the task be adapted or automated?</i> <i>Avoid this part of the job or reduce the length of time spent doing it.</i> <i>Can colleagues offer help with loads?</i> <i>Consider redeployment</i>
2. Does the work or study involve: Standing for long periods? Static Postures?			<i>Rotate the individual into other tasks and roles.</i> <i>Can the individual alternate between standing and sitting to perform the task?</i> <i>Can the frequency of breaks be increased?</i> <i>Reduce the length of time spent undertaking the task.</i> <i>Consider redeployment</i>
3. Is Non - ionising radiation or Ionising radiation present in any of the work or study processes that the worker may be exposed to?			<u>Unless a local procedure document specifies guidance:</u>  <i>Avoid and/or redeploy the worker away from the process</i>

<p>4. Do the work or study processes involve working with/in extremes of temperature? (i.e. Hot environments Cold environments)</p>		<p><i>Avoid prolonged exposure to extremes of temperature Offer additional warm clothing for cold temperatures, Provide rest facilities and access to refreshments, and (warm) meals. Consider redeployment</i></p>
<p>5. Is the worker or student exposed to high volumes of noise e.g. 85dB (A) or more?</p>		<p><i>Avoid prolonged exposure to noise, use PPE and noise reduction methods as recommended by Noise at Work Regulations. Provide quiet rest facilities. <u>It is best to avoid noise exposure in pregnant staff completely, therefore consider temporary redeployment as best option.</u></i></p>
<p>6. Is the worker or student exposed to shocks and vibration? Low frequency vibration Whole body vibration Single shocks (e.g. blow to stomach from attack or assault)</p>		<p><i>A separate risk assessment <u>should</u> be undertaken for staff/ students at risk from assault.</i></p> <p><i><u>Avoid exposure to shocks and vibration. Consider redeployment as best option.</u></i></p>
<p>7. Is the employee or student working at heights/ confined spaces</p>		<p><i>Avoid working/ studying at heights/confined spaces in later stages of pregnancy i.e.5 months onwards or before if the employee feels unable. <u>Consider redeployment as best option.</u></i></p>
<p>8. Is the employee or student working with Chemical Agents? e.g. Carbon Monoxide ; Lead and it's derivatives; Mercury and it's derivatives; Substances labelled R40, 45,46,49,61,63,64 (this list is not exhaustive)</p> <p><b>Please name the agents (and possible route of entry to the body), that the individual is exposed to during work.</b></p>		<p><i><u>Refer to local guidance and COSHH Assessments.</u></i> <i>It is best to eliminate the hazard all together, for the benefit of <u>all</u> workers/ students. Where this is not possible each substance is subject to risk assessment. The control measure will depend on the risk assessment recommendations. Consider reducing the length of exposure, redeployment, and mechanical processes to reduce human exposure/ adapting the task. <u>If in doubt avoid exposure.</u></i></p> <p><b><i>Chemicals used by the worker:</i></b></p>

Hazard	Risk		Possible solution
	Yes	No	
9. Is the employee or student working with biological agents? e.g. Micro-organisms Bacteria and Viruses  <b>Please name the agents (and possible route of entry to the body) that the individual is exposed to during work.</b>			<i>Refer to local guidance and COSHH Assessments.</i> <i>Each substance is subject to risk assessment. The control measure will depend on the risk assessment recommendations.</i> <i>If in doubt avoid exposure</i> <i>Consider reducing the length of exposure, personal protective equipment, redeployment and mechanical processes to reduce human exposure/ adapting the task for pregnant.</i>  <b>Biological agents used by the worker:</b>
10. Does the employee or student work/studying hours that are causing fatigued?			<i>Adjust working / study hours temporarily. Adjust/alter shift patterns</i> <i>Increase frequency of rest breaks. Avoid night shifts (however staff will prefer to continue working at nights).</i>
11. Does the worker/student feel isolated or distressed by work or study			<i>Encourage the employee /student to discuss the issues with their line manager / tutor to find resolution.</i>
12. Does the employee or student undertake travelling or driving for large parts of the working or studying day?			<i>Adjust working hours temporarily or review study pattern.</i> <i>Adjust/alter shift patterns</i> <i>Increase frequency of rest breaks. Avoid night shifts. Encourage the employee to discuss the issues with their line manager to find a resolution.</i>

Outline any recommendations made by the employee / student Doctor and/or Midwife including gestation period: -



What risk assessments are already in place (e.g. DSE assessment)?
Can rest and refreshment breaks be taken as required, and does the employee have access to welfare facilities?
Is a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) required?

Hazards noted	Recommendation for Action	Date for Review

This section completed by:

Managers and/or Academic Supervisor/Tutor Signature:

Name:

Date:

Position:

Employee/Students signature:

Date:

**For Occupational Use and/or Medical Centre (If appropriate):**

Date received:

