



Student Wellbeing & Inclusion

Important information update on University support for pregnant students and those with young babies

This update highlights ongoing work within the University to finalise a formal policy and procedures to support students who are pregnant or have recently given birth and are breastfeeding.

Why is the University providing this update now?

- There have been some important recent changes to the law under the Equality Act 2010; new entitlements have been introduced for students in respect of pregnancy and maternity.
- A University working group was set up in 2011 to consider what this means for our existing procedures and to develop a policy that will ensure consistent support and advice for any students in this position. The working group included staff from a range of areas across the University as well as well as involvement from Edinburgh Napier Students' Association (ENSA).
- This work is ongoing and it is important that both students and staff are aware of these changes.
- The University is also keen to ensure that students are supported in the best possible way and know about the information and advice that is available to them now.

As a student, what should I do if this affects me now?

- The University has already supported many pregnant students in the past. If you are pregnant now or you become pregnant, it is important to disclose this to someone in the University you feel able to confide in, in order to ensure we can provide any support you may need for your course or personal circumstances.
- You may wish to disclose to a member of staff such as your Personal Development Tutor, your Programme Leader, or a member of the Student Wellbeing & Inclusion team. You may also wish to consult independent advice from ENSA Advice.
- Whoever you disclose this to will treat the information sensitively and with your permission, will arrange for you to be supported with any specific help, advice or information necessary.

- It is important to note that the first 13 weeks of pregnancy are regarded as carrying the greatest health and safety risks to the baby's development. Early disclosure to a member of staff is therefore vital if you are exposed to any chemicals, biohazards or involved in any strenuous activities as part of your course.

What other changes are expected in the future when the new measures have been finalised?

- The new formal policy, procedures and information about related student support measures will be widely publicised to both staff and students and information will be included in key publicity materials and handbooks.
- The new measures will include standard forms for consistent information gathering and for undertaking risk assessment where necessary. The new procedures will include consideration of issues such as: time for antenatal care and other maternity related absence, possible options for examinations and assessments, placements, field trips and study abroad, possible support on practical issues such as accommodation, finance specialist advice etc and possible paternity support.
- The University is also working on improving the facilities and equipment we have at all campuses to support issues such as baby changing and breastfeeding; some changes have already taken place.
- The University will be monitoring the implementation of the new measures once they are in place and will welcome student feedback on these.
- If you have any immediate queries or concerns about pregnancy or maternity support, you can contact the Disability and Inclusion team by emailing disabilityandinclusion@napier.ac.uk.

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