

Pregnancy Policy

This document is written in two parts. It recognises that in many cases, should a student become pregnant then, in making her decisions about future action, she will wish to consider, amongst other things, the potential effect on her on-going studies. The first part of this document describes guidelines for Schools/Faculties in regard to providing information in a confidential context in such situations. The second part of the document describes health, safety and well-being measures for students during pregnancy. The considerations addressed in each part of the document are necessarily linked, and will depend on the programme of study and on the timing during the academic year and other factors.

The general principle under which the University will operate is that it will provide clear advice on the implications of pregnancy on a student's period of study and will seek to make reasonable adjustment to facilitate the continued safety and learning of a pregnant student or parent of a very young baby, striving to maintain the student experience.

Part 1. Provision of advice on implications of pregnancy on continuation of studies

Typically a student who becomes pregnant will wish to understand the implications of this, if any, for the continuation of her present studies on the original time scales or whether a period of temporary withdrawal followed by a return in a subsequent year would be necessary.

- The student is strongly advised to consult her GP to discuss medical issues of pregnancy/motherhood prior to approaching the School/Faculty. Non-academic aspects can also be discussed with the Student Support Network or LUU Student Advice Centre.
- The University, through its Schools/Faculties will seek to provide clear advice to a student on the potential impact of a pregnancy on the student's ongoing period of study.
- Schools/Faculties will identify an appropriate member of staff, e.g. the Equal Opportunities Officer (EOO), who can be approached in confidence by a student in such circumstances. The identity of this person will be clearly indicated on the School/Faculty web-page and student handbook and also communicated to the Student Advice Centre in LUU.
- This member of staff will be appropriately trained¹ so as to be aware of potential issues in such cases, including issues specific to their particular discipline area, so as to be able to comment on the likely impact of the pregnancy on the immediate continuation of the student's studies. The member of staff will also be aware of the possible adjustments that can be made within the specific School/Faculty context and at a University level in such cases and of the range of additional sources of advice available (e.g. counselling, financial advice) with the University and LUU².

Possible adjustments include:

- Deferment
- Postponement of assessed coursework or exam submission deadlines
- Credit scheduling/distribution
- Intercalation
- Leave arrangements
- Alternative means of assessment, e.g. written instead of physical performance
- Module selection
- First attempt resits at future examination periods.

¹ Training to be provided through The Equality Service

² A central referral list will be prepared and distributed to Schools/Faculties

- This member of staff will not be required, and will not attempt, to seek to influence the student's decisions – they are simply there to provide context and advice on the extent of any adjustments that can be made to the student's period of study.
- Wherever possible, a meeting will be arranged within 4 working days. Schools/Faculties may need to ensure appropriate cover for periods of absence of the EOO.
- Where a student is dissatisfied with the adjustments offered, she may appeal to the Director of the Equality Unit. Any such appeal will be heard within a reasonable period of time.

Part 2. Procedures for continuation of studies during pregnancy or with very young children

A pregnant student or the parent³ of a baby too young to attend nursery may request a meeting to agree a written plan for the continuation of study, detailing any adjustments agreed to allow continuation. Specific agreed adjustments should be communicated only to relevant teaching staff and examination boards.

For students studying in areas for which significant health & safety issues might arise (e.g. laboratory-based subjects or subjects with high levels of physical activity), advice will also be sought, and made available, from the School/Faculty Manager and/or Safety University Safety Advisory Services and a full risk assessment should be completed.

If it is not reasonably practicable to alter the study conditions, or if such an alteration would not avoid any identified risks, the student may be temporarily suspended from study to avoid these risks. Every effort should be made to ensure that this is done on a deferment basis and avoids termination of study.

The student will be entitled to request further meetings with the School/Faculty member of staff identified in Part 1 above.

During pregnancy, reasonable allowance should be made for the student to attend antenatal care and this must be made without detriment to the student. The student should advise the appropriate member of staff of antenatal arrangements at the earliest opportunity.

Where a student with a young baby is breast-feeding and so requests, the School will provide a private, safe area for this purpose.

LUU Executive Women's Officer
PVC Students & Staff

³ Female or male student