



New and Expectant Mothers

November 2022

PP-NEM-HSP-22

1. Objective

We are committed, in accordance with the general requirements of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, to ensuring that adequate consideration is given to the health, safety and welfare of new and expectant mothers, both staff and students.

2. Definitions

New or Expectant Mothers

Someone who is pregnant, has given birth within the previous six months or who is breastfeeding.

Given Birth

Delivered a living child, or after 24 weeks of pregnancy, a stillborn child.

3. Duties of All Managers

It is the duty of all managers, in planning any activity, to have regard to the type of person who is likely to be exposed to hazards in the course of their work.

If there is the possibility that someone may be exposed to risks which are known to cause adverse effects during pregnancy or nursing then a risk assessment must be carried out for the work.

4. Responsibility of New or Expectant Mothers

In order for us to meet our statutory responsibilities in this regard, all staff and students are advised to inform their manager or tutor as soon as they become aware that they are pregnant so that a risk assessment can be carried out.

5. Significant Risks

If the risk assessment identifies a significant risk to the new or expectant mother, including the feeding of the child during the first six months, then steps must be taken to reduce the risk to an acceptable level, if it cannot be entirely eliminated.

The following measures should be considered:

- Temporarily adjusting working conditions or hours of work;
- Identifying, in liaison with the SLT, suitable alternative work;
- Refraining from work temporarily until such time as alternative working arrangements can be considered.

6. Potential Hazards

The following sections give guidance on some of the major issues which either cause concern to women or have the potential to present a significant risk.

A form that may be used to assist with the risk assessment is provided at the end of this document.

6.1. Physical

6.1.1. Manual handling of loads

Pregnant women are especially at risk when performing manual handling tasks. This is due both to postural difficulties and to hormonal changes that may increase the susceptibility of the body to injury. There can also be an increased risk to those who have recently given birth,



particularly after a caesarean section. There is no evidence that breastfeeding mothers are at greater risk than other workers when performing manual handling tasks.

Manual handling should be avoided by pregnant women unless the risks are judged to be low. If this is not possible the character and extent of the tasks should be controlled so that the risk of injury is minimised and in cases where heavy or repetitive manual handling is an integral part of the individual's job they may need to be temporarily re-deployed during the pregnancy and for a period of time after they have given birth. Contact Personnel in such circumstances.

6.1.2. Work with computers

Women who are working with computers may experience difficulties achieving a comfortable working posture as the pregnancy progresses and difficulties in sitting for long periods.

Supervisors should take account of this and should discuss this with the staff member regularly so that potentially beneficial modifications to working patterns or equipment can be considered.

There is no risk from any radiological emissions from computer screens. Noise
There is no specific risk to pregnant or breastfeeding women from exposure to high noise levels although, as is the case with all people, prolonged exposure may cause stress. This can lead to raised blood pressure and tiredness. Compliance with the current requirements of the Noise at Work Regulations 2005 is considered sufficient to meet the needs of new or expectant mothers.

6.1.3. Extremes of heat or cold

When pregnant, women have a lower tolerance to heat and may be more liable to faint or suffer heat stress. However, temperatures within the range encountered in normal office work are not likely to represent a significant hazard. Access to refreshments and rest periods help to alleviate any problems that may arise. No specific pregnancy related health and safety problems arise from exposure to cold conditions but clearly such exposure should be minimised as a matter of normal workplace standards.

We have assessed the possible risks from other physical hazards (radiation, shocks, vibrations) and believe that the general working environment has a very low risk in these areas.

6.1.4. Biological and Chemical

The Health and Safety Executive advise that some biological and chemical agents may affect the health and safety of new and expectant mothers.

We have assessed the possible risks from biological and chemical agents and believe that the general working environment within Phoenix has a very low risk in this area.

6.1.5. Job factors and working conditions

During pregnancy the nature of the individual's job should be considered to identify whether there are aspects of this work that may place the woman at greater risk.

These include factors such as working hours and working time (e.g. night work, shift work or long working hours.), excessive or difficult travel as part of the job, lone working, risk of attack or violence etc.



These can be more difficult to manage and for the individual to cope with during pregnancy. The effects of stress and depression should also be considered.



7. Risk Assessment Form

Hazard	Risk		Possible solutions for consideration
	Yes	No	
Does the individual's job involve: Reaching? Stretching? Repetitive Twisting? Lifting/carrying loads?			Use of a mechanical aid(s). Adapt or automate tasks. Avoid this part of the job or reduce the length of time spent doing it Can colleagues offer help with loads?
Does the job involve: Standing for long periods? Static postures?			Rotate the individual into other tasks and roles. Alternate between standing and sitting tasks. Increase the frequency of breaks. Reduce the frequency of time spent undertaking the task.
Does the work process involve working with /in extremes of temperature?			Avoid prolonged exposure to extremes of temperature. Consider temporary redeployment.
Is the individual exposed to volumes of noise e.g., 80dB (A) or more?			Avoid prolonged exposure to noise, use PPE and noise reduction methods. Provide quiet rest facilities.
Is the individual working at heights or confined spaces?			Avoid working at height and confined spaces in later stages of pregnancy, i.e., 5 months onwards or before if the individual feels unable to do so.
Does the individual work hours that are causing her to feel fatigued?			Adjust working hours temporarily. Adjust/alter shift patterns. Increase frequency of breaks.
Does the individual feel isolated or distressed by work?			Encourage individual to discuss with their line manager to find resolution. Refer individual to counselling services.
Does the individual travel overseas for large parts of her work?			Adjust/reduce the amount of overseas travel temporarily. Encourage individual to discuss with their line manager to find resolution.



Hazards Noted	Controls/Recommendations for Actions	Review date

The persons below should sign to show that the assessment is a correct and reasonable reflection of the hazards and of the control measures and actions required.

New/Expectant Mother's name:	New/Expectant Mother's signature:	Date:
Health & Safety Manager's name:	Health & Safety Manager's signature:	Date:

