

The Department's work activities include a number with risks that pregnant staff members or students can be exposed to, particularly during the course of practical work. This work method statement is intended to provide local instruction on procedures that need to be followed with regard to their work activity when an employee or student believes they may be pregnant.

Risk Assessment

The College has published [Guidance information about potential risks](#), a number of which employees and students in Media Arts can potentially be exposed to when considering the example work activities. Risk levels for a number of the department's General Risk Assessment hazards will increase significantly, both in terms of likelihood and the consequences of an accident or incident. Our medium level **risks may effectively become high** without the necessary controls being in place.

As a general principle, there needs to be an effective operating margin in place for the management of hazards for all students and staff, so that risk levels are minimised before awareness of pregnancy is disclosed. Everyone can be proactive in ensuring the well-being of their colleagues before awareness of any pregnancy by working as a team, ensuring no one is struggling with manual handling tasks or stressful situations without any assistance, and being understanding when someone is unable to do work that would otherwise be within their usual limits of capability.

Example work tasks:

- Manual handling, such as lifting and carrying equipment, prop furniture or scene flats
- Using or being exposed to substances that may have harmful properties
- Lone working
- High pressure situations that may cause stress
- Using a computer workstation
- Driving on College business

Physical environment:

- Any requirement to work at height must be eliminated until the individual is capable of resuming normal work activity.
- The department must consider the need to provide a clean and private area that can be used by a new or expectant mother.
- Any requirement to walk distances, particularly when this involves walking up and down hill or using steps and stairs, must be considered and reduced to a minimum.

- Facilities adjacent to the immediate work area should be reviewed so suitable provision can be made to allow rest or withdraw from area when the pregnant worker feels tired or under stress.
- All work areas must be cleaned and maintained to an effective standard (refer to corresponding standards in the work method statement for Preventing slips and trips)
- Workstations may require reassessment to ensure they are properly configured to suit the user's changing requirements and minimise potential physical strain, etc.

Sequence of tasks:

1. Work activity must be designed to anticipate as far as possible the potential hazards for expectant mothers and operate control measures that safeguard all women, including students performing high risk tasks in relation to media practice work.
2. A staff member who becomes pregnant must advise their line manager at the earliest opportunity so her work can be specifically risk assessed. Her line manager must convene a risk assessment review meeting within five days of notification and implement an appropriate course of action in accordance with the [College guidance on maternity and the risk assessment process](#).
3. A student who becomes pregnant should notify their Personal Advisor or the Department Manager at the earliest opportunity so their particular circumstances can be reviewed in the context of their academic programme and suitable arrangements made with course teaching staff (while at the same time protecting confidentiality in accordance with the student's wishes), for example by allowing exemption from practice activities that require physically demanding manual handling operations.
4. In either circumstance, the College has a published [checklist](#) for gathering preliminary information, together with [guidance information about potential risks](#).
5. It will probably be necessary to review the risk assessment and work activity during the course of the pregnancy to take account of any changes in condition or specific medical advice received. This will also need to be reviewed on return to work following maternity leave.
6. Any personal and protective equipment required for work must be of a comfortable size to allow for different stages of pregnancy.
7. Any incidents or accidents occurring during or as a probable consequence of any work activity must be reported using the College incident and accident reporting procedure

Supervision:

- Line managers are responsible for ensuring new and expectant mothers work in accordance with any specific arrangements that have been put in place as a result of their risk assessment review.

- Course convenors are responsible for ensuring that any practical activities set in relation to their course are organised so the pregnant student is allowed, both practically and formally, to be safeguarded against enhanced risk situations.

Written Instructions:

- [College guidance on maternity and the risk assessment process](#)
- [Checklist for gathering preliminary information](#)
- [Guidance information about potential risks](#)

Training:

- Specific training outcomes (including those affecting co-workers) may be identified during the process of risk assessment review.

Reference material

- HSE Guide for new and expectant mothers who work (<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg373.pdf>)

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