**Informatics Graduate School**

**Becoming a Parent During Your PhD: Planning Sheet**

If you think you might require parental leave during your PhD you are welcome to use this sheet as a starting point for things you’ll want to consider. You can discuss this with a member of the Graduate School team at any stage – **in confidence** - just email [igs@inf.ed.ac.uk](mailto:igs@inf.ed.ac.uk).

We recommend you get in touch with us as soon as possible so we can ensure a good plan is in place for your pregnancy, parental/adoption leave and return to study. We’ll meet with you to talk through this planning sheet, and support you in researching any questions you have.

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| **Question** | **Answer** | **Any actions needed and who will complete them** |
| Are you pregnant, an expectant partner or planning to adopt? |  |  |
| If pregnant have you informed your GP yet so you can access GP and midwife services? |  |  |
| Do you have a due date/adoption date yet? |  |  |
| Have you informed your supervisor; if not when do you intend to inform your supervisor?  *We recommend discussing with your supervisor at an early stage. They should allow you time off for medical appointments/antenatal classes.*  *See the University policy here:* [*http://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/studentmaternitypolicy.pdf*](http://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/studentmaternitypolicy.pdf) |  |  |
| If you are pregnant you must work through the Health & Safety guidance and New & expectant mothers model risk assessment with your supervisor (or their delegate):  *Guidance:* [*http://web.inf.ed.ac.uk/infweb/health-safety*](http://web.inf.ed.ac.uk/infweb/health-safety)  *RA Form:* [*http://web.inf.ed.ac.uk/infweb/health-safety/risk-assessments/new-expectant-mothers*](http://web.inf.ed.ac.uk/infweb/health-safety/risk-assessments/new-expectant-mothers) |  |  |
| Are you a Tier 4 student?  *If so we advise discussing any proposed leave/delay to completion of your studies with an immigration advisor:* [*http://www.ed.ac.uk/global/immigration/enquiry-form*](http://www.ed.ac.uk/global/immigration/enquiry-form) |  |  |
| Do you plan to take an interruption of studies?  *Please note that:*   * *You must take a minimum of two weeks off as maternity leave, and a maximum of one year is possible* * *A maximum of one year of adoption leave is possible* * *Tier 4 students can take an interruption of up to 60 days only while retaining their visa status* * *You will need to complete an official interruption request form for approval:* <http://web.inf.ed.ac.uk/infweb/student-services/igs/phd/programme-changes/interruption-of-study> |  |  |
| Have you submitted an official interruption request form? |  |  |
| Who funds your PhD?  *Please note that all funders offer different arrangements for funding for parental leave. Funders will need to be informed of any planned leave.* |  |  |
| Do you know how your funding will be affected? |  |  |
| What funding/benefits can you receive?  *As well as possible stipend dependent on funder, we recommend that students investigate the following:*   * *Child Benefit (apply as soon as possible after your child is born/placed with you):* [*https://www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk/en/articles/claiming-child-benefit*](https://www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk/en/articles/claiming-child-benefit) * *Free prescriptions and dental care; ask your doctor/midwife for your Maternity Exemption Certificate* * *If you are demonstrating or working in another job, whether you are eligible for statutory maternity pay or maternity allowance or adoption pay, using the calculator here:* [*https://www.gov.uk/pay-leave-for-parents*](https://www.gov.uk/pay-leave-for-parents) * *Whether you are eligible for Child Tax Credits:* [*https://www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk/en/articles/child-tax-credit*](https://www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk/en/articles/child-tax-credit) *, we recommend you telephone not complete the online form. For this your income counts as zero unless you are working; stipend is not income when considering these tax credits because you do not pay tax on it.* * *Check if you qualify for Healthy Start food vouchers* [*https://www.healthystart.nhs.uk/healthy-start-vouchers/do-i-qualify/*](https://www.healthystart.nhs.uk/healthy-start-vouchers/do-i-qualify/) * *Check (only for 3 months after birth) if you qualify for a SureStart maternity grant:* [*https://www.gov.uk/sure-start-maternity-grant*](https://www.gov.uk/sure-start-maternity-grant) * *If relevant, your partner can receive any funding/benefits (e.g. Paternity Pay; Shared Parental Leave at a higher rate than statutory paternity pay; childcare vouchers)* * *If you are struggling, you can access Discretionary or Hardship funds:* [*http://www.ed.ac.uk/student-funding/financial-support/additional-financial-assistance*](http://www.ed.ac.uk/student-funding/financial-support/additional-financial-assistance) * *There is a useful baby costs calculator and benefits timeline here:* [*https://www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk/en/articles/baby-costs-calculator*](https://www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk/en/articles/baby-costs-calculator)[*https://www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk/en/tools/baby-money-timeline/*](https://www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk/en/tools/baby-money-timeline/) |  |  |
| Have you thought about when you will return to study and whether you might want to study part-time?  *Please note that:*   * *Tier 4 students cannot study part time.* * *Requests to study part time will be considered by your supervisor and need to be approved by the Graduate School and College.* * *Please return to the Health & Safety advice and risk assessment forms for new mothers before returning:* <http://web.inf.ed.ac.uk/infweb/health-safety> * *The University does provide facilities for breastfeeding/expressing milk.* * *Some childcare providers offer a discount to University students, ask your potential provider.* * *EUSA hosts a webpage for students with children or caring responsibilities, which provides useful guidance on finding childcare provides:*   [*https://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/support\_and\_advice/the\_advice\_place/information\_for\_student\_groups/students\_with\_children/*](https://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/support_and_advice/the_advice_place/information_for_student_groups/students_with_children/)  *We are happy to advise about different options prior to your leave. You may wish to defer the final decision until you have had your child.* |  |  |
| Thinking about what stage of the PhD you are at, will you need to adjust any assessment or project timelines?  *For discussion with your supervisor and/or thesis committee and possibly your programme administrator/funder.* |  |  |
| Would you like the Graduate School to try to pair you with a buddy PhD student who has had children, if one is available?  There is also a EUSA Facebook Group for Student Parents and Carers: <https://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/support_and_advice/the_advice_place/information_for_student_groups/students_with_children/>  Additionally, the Student Advisory Service at Edinburgh Global run the International Families and Partners Network, which provides advice and support to the families and partners of international students:  <https://www.ed.ac.uk/global/student-advisory-service/social-connections/international-families-and-partners-network> |  |  |