

advice and guidance *cyngor i fyfyrwyr*

CARDIFF
UNIVERSITY

PRIFYSGOL
CAERDYDD

If you are a home student who becomes pregnant during your studies you may need advice on funding, housing options and advice on your studies.

If I fall pregnant during my course can I take time off?

Yes, students can take an Interruption of Study for up to 12 months on the grounds of pregnancy. Some students decide to take this time out near to when their baby is due but it depends on how you are coping with your course during the pregnancy. To take an Interruption of Study it is advisable to speak to your personal tutor to discuss any academic implications, you can also come to the Student Support Centre to speak to an advisor about applying for an Interruption of Study. Research students would also need to contact their department and relevant research council regarding extending the submission date for their thesis.

What happens to my student funding during an Interruption of Study on the grounds of pregnancy?

If you are an undergraduate student receiving a student loan then your student support would stop. You can apply to SFE or your LEA for discretionary funding during this time if you feel you are unable to get funding from any other source and you are unable to work part time. If you are receiving a non means tested NHS bursary then this should continue for 45 weeks during your interruption of study but you would need to inform the NHS Grants Unit. If you are a postgraduate research student receiving a stipend you would need to discuss with your department and relevant research council regarding maternity leave and funding.

Can I claim any benefits during my pregnancy?

You may be eligible for some Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) or Maternity Allowance (MA). The rules surrounding eligibility for these are complicated and are based on your employment record.

Can I get any help with Healthcare costs?

Everyone in Wales is eligible for free prescriptions, and you may also benefit from free vitamins and free dental treatment on the grounds of pregnancy. Your GP's surgery should have further information and an application form HC1.

student support centre
canolfan **cymorth** i fyfyrwyr

50 Park Place, CF10 3AT
Cardigan House, CF14 4XN
w. www.cardiff.ac.uk/studentsupport
e. studentsupportcentre@cardiff.ac.uk
t. 02920 874 844

How can the University help me during my Leave of Absence?

The University's Financial Contingency Fund (FCF) may be able to help although usually it is only in exceptional circumstances that it can help during an Interruption of Study. Students would have to show they have tried to access all other sources of funding before being considered for FCF. An advisor at the Student Support Centre can give you advice on your options and help with applying for any funding or could offer advice on housing. Often for students expecting a baby housing after the baby is born can be an issue. We can offer advice on your options including putting you in touch with local Housing Associations or helping find suitable accommodation.

What funding is available once I have had the baby but before I return to University?

Once the baby is born you will be able to claim Child benefit (CB) and Child Tax Credit (CTC) for the child. CB is not means tested however CTC is dependent upon your income. If you are a lone parent you should qualify for Income Support (IS) when you are not studying full time and as such would qualify for full housing benefit.

You may also be able to claim a Sure Start Maternity Grant, of £500. You will be eligible for this if you are claiming IS or receiving CTC at a rate above the family element. You can claim for the SSMG up to 11 weeks before birth or up to 3 months after.

What if I return to work, can I claim any support?

Yes, if you work at least 16 hours per week you can claim Working Tax Credit which also has childcare elements to help with the cost of your childcare.

Once I return to Study what financial help can I get?

Once you return to your study your normal statutory student support should resume. In addition there is targeted funding for Undergraduate students with children. You can claim the Childcare Grant which covers up to 85% of registered childcare costs, this is means tested and can be applied for through SFE or your LEA or NHS grants unit. You may also be eligible for a Parents Learning Allowance which is a grant to help with course related costs for full time students with dependent children. How much you get depends on your household income but the maximum is £1,508 per year (2011-12). This can be applied for through SFE or your LEA.

You may also be eligible to apply for Income Support and Housing Benefit during the summer vacations.

What childcare is available?

The University has a Day-care centre which offers concessionary rates for students however places get taken very quickly and there is often a waiting list for the crèche so try to register interest early.

For all additional childcare costs not covered by your student funding and benefits you can apply to the Financial Contingency Fund for help (providing you are accessing all your statutory student support.) Forms are available on the website or from the Student Support centre reception areas.