



**UNIVERSITY OF
PLYMOUTH**

Nursing Mothers Guidance

V3 08/09/2014

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1. Introduction

1.1 The University of Plymouth wishes to encourage an understanding of breastfeeding and a positive and supportive attitude towards breastfeeding amongst all staff. The University recognises the health benefits to a mother and baby of breastfeeding and wishes to support employees who want to express their milk so that they can combine breastfeeding and work.

1.2 The University values all its employees and understands that both the mother and the University benefit from supporting breastfeeding while at work, for example:

- Higher rates of return from leave lowering the costs of covering leave
- Earlier return from leave bringing skills and experience back into the workplace
- Lower absenteeism because breastfed babies are, on average, healthier
- Support for breastfeeding mothers evidences the University's commitment promote gender equality
- Being recognized as a family friendly employer promotes the University as an employer of choice

1.3 The aim of this policy is to support mothers who wish to continue breastfeeding when they return to work.

2. Facility for Expressing Breast Milk

2.1. The University acknowledges the need for breastfeeding mothers to have privacy and time to express milk and has provided a facility for the use of breast feeding women in line with the Health and Safety Executive recommendations.

2.2 A warm, comfortable and private room is provided. It is equipped with a comfortable chair and a fridge for storing expressed milk. There is an electric point for mothers who wish to use an electric pump and facilities for washing and for sterilising equipment.

3. Responsibilities of managers

3.1 Whilst an employee is breastfeeding, managers are required to any make necessary changes in the workplace because the nursing mother and her baby have special health and safety protection under the same regulations that gives protection to pregnant employees.

3.2 Managers should be supportive and flexible with respect to working patterns when a breastfeeding mother returns to work. This may mean changing working conditions and frequency of breaks. Additional breaks may be required to allow a mother time to express breast milk and managers should arrange any necessary cover for additional breaks. Managers should note that the time taken to express milk may vary.

3.3 Employees should not be required to attend training courses or meetings that would involve excessively long working days which may be detrimental to breastfeeding.

4. Responsibilities of Breastfeeding Employees

4.1 The breastfeeding employee must notify her line manager that she is breastfeeding and wishes to express milk whilst at work.

4.2 The breastfeeding employee should communicate her arrangements to colleagues appropriately, for example, if she has to leave during a meeting.

4.3 She is responsible for providing her own bottles, sterilizing equipment and breast pumps. She is also responsible for labelling her breast milk and storing in the fridge provided. The expressed milk should be stored below 5C until it is taken home.

4.4 She is responsible for ensuring that she leaves the breastfeeding room clean and tidy.

5. Access to Breastfeeding Facilities

5.1 Before the breastfeeding employee returns to work she must notify her line manager that she wishes to use the expressing facilities. The employee contacts Occupational Health on 01752 587412 to arrange booking of the facility.