

Faculty of Health

GUIDELINES FOR PREGNANT STUDENTS

Pre and post natal students on placement

The Faculty of Health has a Duty of Care to all students and a number of safeguards are required to ensure that your health and wellbeing is maintained during and following your pregnancy. To ensure that your health is not compromised pregnant students may attend clinical placement up to, and not more, than 36 weeks gestation. A certificate, from your health practitioner (GP, Midwife or Obstetrician), that identifies your approximate due date and that you are able to cope with the demands of your studies (Fit for Practice) will be required at 34 weeks gestation.

Students who are less than 36 weeks gestation who are unable to attend clinical placement, due to their pregnancy, must submit an Attendance Variation Application (AVA) and have a medical certificate that clearly describes they are unable to undertake the duties required of a student appropriate to the clinical requirements for the unit.

Students may only attend clinical placement after, and not before, 6 weeks post-partum (after the birth of the baby). Following the birth of your child a fit-for-practice, return to studies, clearance will also be required. Given that your health practitioner has identified that you are fit for studies, no further AVA Special Consideration will be granted related to your pregnancy and birth of your child.

Lactating students on placement

Your clinical teacher will be advised that you be given time, during your placement, to express your breast milk and have facilities to store the milk or have your baby brought to you for lactation breaks.

Note regarding vaccinations

If pregnant students are not fully protected against the specified diseases in the NSW Department of Health special requirements <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/Pages/notification.aspx> then Medical Practitioners/Obstetricians/Midwife will NOT allow pregnant women to complete their vaccinations.

- a. You will need to notify the Professional Experience Unit if your vaccinations are not complete and you cannot fully comply with NSW Health Special Requirements as your placement will need to be deferred.
- b. You can have your vaccinations soon after the baby is born, even if you are breastfeeding. (Advice as per Immunisation Handbook <https://immunisationhandbook.health.gov.au/>)

Considerations

Pregnant students should further note some mental health facilities do not accept students who are obviously/visibly pregnant.

Health care facilities have a duty of care to their patients/clients and also may not accept pregnant students.

Pre Natal Students in Laboratory Classes

Chemicals known to have reproductive, teratogenic or carcinogenic effects are used in small amounts in undergraduate chemistry and biochemistry practical classes, always with appropriate engineering and personal protective controls in place. Chemical exposure in Cadaver Labs is monitored and maintained at safe levels according to Australian Standards. Laboratory staff can source relevant information for you on request.

You should seek medical guidance in determining physical activity limitations on an individual basis.

Suitable arrangements may be made to modify your activity during lab classes where necessary.