

## INFORMATION FOR PROSPECTIVE NEW PARENTS AT LMCB

### During pregnancy

Things to do and consider as soon as you find out you are expecting a child.

- Let Paul Topham know as soon as possible to go over any special health and safety precautions
- Let Claire Hebblethwaite know to arrange any HR procedures regarding maternity leave
- Think about nursery spaces. London nursery spaces are very tight, and often have a long (at least 1 year) waiting list. You may want to use one near your house, or UCL also has a very good nursery, and maintains waiting list. UCL nursery allows use of salary sacrifice (i.e. you pay for it before tax, thus making it significantly cheaper than other local London nurseries).

More information on salary sacrifice:

[http://www.ucl.ac.uk/hr/docs/tax\\_efficient\\_childcare.php](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/hr/docs/tax_efficient_childcare.php).

For more information on the nursery it is best to arrange a visit, email:

[nursery@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:nursery@ucl.ac.uk) or call 020 7679 7461.

There are also Childcare Vouchers you can purchase tax efficiently if you do not wish to use UCL's nursery:

[http://www.ucl.ac.uk/hr/docs/childcare\\_voucher\\_scheme.php](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/hr/docs/childcare_voucher_scheme.php)

- Apply for Maternity/Paternity leave and know about your entitlements. UCL has a shared parental leave scheme. For more information and application forms: <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/hr/docs/parental-leave.php>
- UCL runs PACT workshops for parents and carers. For more information: <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/hr/equalities/gender/pact>. This is a useful forum for meeting other parents at UCL and to learn more about parental leave, balancing work/child care, etc.
- There is a very useful fact sheet that UCL has provided for parents: [www.ucl.ac.uk/hr/equalities/gender/pregnancy\\_mat\\_factsheet.pdf](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/hr/equalities/gender/pregnancy_mat_factsheet.pdf)

### During maternity/paternity leave

Maternity/paternity leave is a big change from your normal working routine. It can be a stressful and lonely experience without the appropriate support. Here's some information to help you make the most of your leave time.

- Most councils in London have Children's Centres where they run many activities for babies and parents. Ask your midwife/hospital for information, or check your council website. These are nice ways to meet other parents and for your baby to meet other babies. There are also often well-established groups held in local churches or community centres. The NCT run classes during pregnancy with groups often continuing to meet socially with their new babies.
- Make the most of your 'Keeping in Touch' days, if you'd like to come in for meetings, etc.

### Returning to work

Returning to work is a difficult time, balancing work and childcare. Here are some facilities and policies provided by the LMCB to ease this transition process.

- **Breastfeeding/expressing.** Children and babies are welcome to visit the LMCB, but they should not be taken into laboratories. Breastfeeding is welcome in any of these areas: offices, tearoom, meeting rooms, but not in laboratories or lavatories. For mothers who prefer to use a private space to feed or express, we provide a few rooms for this: core staff tea room (ground floor), Sara Mole's office (B.105), and Paul Topham's office, when these are not in use. A sign can be picked up from reception to be placed on the door of the room to indicate it is being used for feeding/expressing. In the unlikely circumstance that all of the 3 above rooms are busy, UCL also has designated rooms for this: <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/hr/docs/breastfeeding.php>. The fridge in the core staff tea room can be used for storing milk.
- **Baby changing facility.** There is a baby-changing table provided in the ground floor disabled toilet.
- **Flexible working hours.** LMCB is supportive of flexible working hours to accommodate for childcare duties, but please discuss any special requests with your line manager first.
- **Seminars and meetings during core hours.** All seminars and meetings are scheduled to take place during the core hours of 10am-5pm such that staff with children are not inconvenienced.

### **Especially for Partners**

Parental leave can be split between the parents. Apart from the compulsory two week period to be taken by the mother, following the birth of the child, the remaining, maximum of 50 weeks, can be shared between the parents. The leave must be taken during the 12 months following the birth (or adoption) of a child but apart from that is completely flexible. For more details please visit;

<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/hr/docs/parental-leave.php>.

Caring for your child is extremely rewarding, but it takes a lot of your time, especially in the early days when things are very unpredictable. Take the time to enjoy the very special early days not only with your child but also being at home with the family, and don't think about work for a while (weeks!). Once you have established a routine you can start thinking of balancing this with work. Initially be flexible with how much time you spend on work (limit any commitment to work, i.e. meetings, conferences, talks, etc.) whilst you learn to adapt work:life balance. Talk to line-manager and take the leave entitled. Academic research allows flexible working hours and is therefore very well suited to accommodate for childcare duties, but please discuss any special requests with your line manager first.

### **Support @ LMCB**

There is enough collective experience @LMCB to offer informal support from pre-baby up to going off to University. Yanlan/Ione holds list of those with children who

are willing to share their experiences. Yanlan and Rob de Bruin are happy to help with any concerns you may have.

### **Finally**

Congratulations, you are about to embark on a great adventure – yes, it will be challenging but also very rewarding. Academic science as at the LMCB is one of the most flexible careers.

### **Other Useful links**

#### **Safety Services Guidance for Pregnant workers**

[http://www.ucl.ac.uk/estates/safetynet/guidance/pregnant\\_workers/index.htm](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/estates/safetynet/guidance/pregnant_workers/index.htm)

#### **UCL Parental Leave Policy**

<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/hr/docs/parental-leave.php>

#### **UCL Parents and Carers Network (PACT)**

<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/hr/equalities/gender/pact.php>

#### **Support for working parents and carers**

<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/hr/equalities/gender/guidance%20on%20supporting%20working%20parents%20and%20carersFINAL.pdf>

#### **Health and Safety Executive: FAQs on pregnant workers**

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/mothers/faqs.htm#q3>