



Swansea
University
Prifysgol
Abertawe

Student Life
Bywyd Myfyrwyr

Pregnancy & Maternity

Information Guide for
International Students
and Family Members



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Introduction

We understand that some international students, or their family members, may experience pregnancy during their time at Swansea University.

It is important to us that you have as much information available about pregnancy and healthcare to support you during this time, so that you can make informed decisions for you and your family.

This leaflet should provide you with a guide to information and considerations, both internal and external to the University, in order to be fully prepared and informed during this time.

We hope that it will be useful to you. We encourage you to engage fully, and **as early as possible**, with the processes, support and resources outlined within.

Confirming Pregnancy & First Steps

If you, or someone you know, may be pregnant, then it is important to confirm pregnancy as soon as possible. This would give plenty of time for preparations and/or decision making. You can access pregnancy tests to do at home, or take one through a medical service.

Accessing Pregnancy Tests

There are a number of ways you can obtain a pregnancy test, and most are simple to use without the need for any medical supervision. Among others, you can access tests from:

- **Shops & Pharmacies:** Home pregnancy tests are available to buy from a range of shops, including pharmacies and medical retailers such as Boots and Superdrug, and most supermarkets like Tesco and Sainsbury's. These cost around £5 - £10.
- **Swansea University Students' Union: Free of charge** at-home tests are available on request from the Students' Union, this is a confidential no-questions-asked service available from:
 - Bay Campus - Y Twyni
 - Singleton Campus - SUSU Officers Office, Faraday Tower.
- **Swansea Bay Health Board Sexual Health Service: Free of Charge** service available at Singleton Hospital. Call or email ahead to make an appointment:
 - Telephone 0300 550 279 (Monday – Thursday 8am – 3pm, Friday 8am – 1pm)
 - Email SBU.SexualHealth@wales.nhs.uk
- **Your Personal GP / Medical Centre:** Many GP services offer pregnancy testing, however this does vary depending on the individual Medical Centre. You will need to contact the GP you are registered with to find out if they offer this service.

Please note the **University Medical Centre does not provide appointments for pregnancy testing.**

Before taking a Pregnancy Test

Taking a pregnancy test can be a significantly emotional and challenging experience. While this might not be possible for a number of reasons, we do suggest having a friend or family member with you for support. Make sure you are in a safe setting where, whatever the result, you will feel comfortable in expressing any emotions that might follow the outcome of a test.

If the Pregnancy Test is Positive

Finding out you are pregnant can bring about a range of emotions and feelings, dependent on an individual's situation. This news can be particularly challenging if a pregnancy has not been anticipated or included in an original study plan.

Some students, especially international students, may not have a strong friendship group or family network around them to discuss options and concerns. They may also not fully understand what options are available to them from the UK Health Service (NHS) and other organisations. It is very important that students reach out to those who can listen and inform at this time.

The following services offer impartial, non-judgmental, and **fully confidential** advice and support to make sure that students are aware of all their options, have someone to talk to, and feel they can confidently make any decisions needed.

Swansea University Support Services

Discovering you or your partner are pregnant may have left you feeling a mix of emotions, you may be excited but also overwhelmed about the changes to come. We are committed to providing an environment where all students are supported and treated fairly with dignity and respect throughout their studies.

The University has a wide range of support services available for you to access, covering a huge range of areas. Take a look at the [Support & Wellbeing site](#) for full details of all the services on offer.

In the first instance, if you intend the pregnancy to continue to term, you should get in contact with your faculty or College's [Student Experience and Information team](#). They will ensure you are fully aware of the support available to you, create a coordinated plan and arrange a risk assessment.

The [Welfare@CampusLife](#) team provides practical advice and guidance to students as well as signposting to specialist support services. We encourage all students to take a look at the dedicated [advice pages](#) on our website, which cover a wide range of welfare-related matters.

However, if you have any additional questions regarding your pregnancy and your options, we are here to support you no matter what decision you make. Please email safeguardingdisclosure@swansea.ac.uk

You might also want to consider taking advantage of The Listening Service. This is a service, operated by the Multi Faith team, where students can talk things through in a relaxed and open way. This is not counselling or therapy, but many people find talking about a situation really helpful. This can be by phone, by online session or in person. For information visit [The Listening Service website](#)

Non-University Support Services

We do hope that, should you need them, you will make use of the resources and services provided by the University. We do appreciate that some students might prefer to seek support and advice from outside sources. These are two services that may help you following a positive pregnancy test:

[Pregnancy Advice Service - Singleton Hospital](#)

Swansea Bay Health Board provides a confidential, impartial [Pregnancy Advisory Service](#). Enquirers are connected to a medical professional to discuss options, and for help with making informed, supported decisions. They also provide signposting and guidance about next steps.

To self-refer to this service, without seeing GP, call 01792 200303 or visit the [website](#).

[The Keyhope Centre](#)

Keyhope is an independent service in Swansea, which provides pregnancy testing, guidance and information. They can also provide access to trained counsellors who can help with pre- and post-abortion support, as well as for those continuing pregnancy. In some urgent situations, they may be able to organise emergency childcare support. Contact them via the [website](#) or by calling 01792 773800

These are just two of many support services available in Swansea and across the wider UK. You may also wish to look at the Support Services & Organisations section (pages 19 - 22). This provides a fuller list of services and organisations that might be more relevant to your personal circumstances.

If you find you need more help, then please [contact Student Support Services](#) who will do their best to provide or identify the right support for you.



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NHS Services for pregnancy, childbirth & beyond

If you become pregnant and intend to continue the pregnancy to term, you should engage with National Health Service (NHS) pregnancy and childcare services **as early as possible** to keep you and your baby safe. Although it is not a legal requirement to advise the NHS of your pregnancy, it is strongly recommended that you take advantage of the services offered and allow for both you and the local Health Board to be prepared.

There are a range of services and support available to you through pregnancy, birth and early childcare and it is important that you make yourself aware of these. You and your baby will receive regular check-ups, scans and have access to skilled midwives and other services. This ongoing engagement also ensures that, at the appropriate time, the maternity team at the hospital will be fully prepared and informed regarding delivery and any choices you have made regarding that.

Importantly, engaging with the NHS early on in pregnancy means you will be able to ask questions, seek guidance and be more confident throughout pregnancy and birth.

The following pages contain **important information you need to be aware of** including:

- How to access NHS Pregnancy Services
- Immigration information & guidance about charges for UK NHS services
- Important information about NHS access for newborn babies



How to Access NHS Pregnancy Services

To access NHS pregnancy services you will usually need a referral from a GP. This enables your GP and the Midwifery team to communicate in case there are any specific health needs you have, or if any develop during pregnancy:

If you are registered with the University Health Centre:

The University Health Centre **does not provide services relating to pregnancy and childbirth**, but they will help you find one that does. You should contact the Health Centre as soon as possible to advise them of your pregnancy. They will review your details, find a GP for you in the area and make a referral for you – your details and information will be transferred, and your new GP will contact you to make an initial appointment.

If you are registered with a GP in the community:

Contact your GP as soon as you can to let them know about your pregnancy. They will then be able to advise you on the services they offer and arrange an appointment for you. They will also refer you to the community midwife team and advise you of the support available and the pathway ahead.

If you are not yet registered with a GP:

If you haven't got a GP, then **you will need to register with one as soon as you can**. You can find your nearest GP using the [NHS Wales 111 website](#) – this will provide you with a selection of GP practices near you. You'll then need to contact the GP directly so you can register with them and arrange an initial appointment. Please note that you should not choose University Health Centre as they do not provide services relating to pregnancy and childbirth.

Self-Referral without a GP:

It is strongly recommended that you register with a GP in order to make sure you have access to healthcare services, and that any wider care plans can be put in place if needed. If you make the choice not to do so, you can also self-refer to the Community Midwife team. For the Swansea & Neath Port Talbot areas, please visit the [Swansea Bay University Health Board Maternity Services site](#) for details. You can also find further information at the [NHS 111 Wales Pregnancy](#) website.

Further advice & support about GP Services and registration:

If you would like further support and information about GP services in Wales, what services you can expect to receive and how to register you can access:

- [NHS Wales 111](#) - The [NHS Wales GP FAQ Page](#) answers most common queries. You can also call them on 111, or use the '[Ask a Question](#)' service.
- Safeguarding and Disclosure team - You can find information on the Student Health [Pages](#)
- [Students' Union](#) - Providing support for a wide range of issues, they can assist you if you have difficulty getting access to a GP or need help with forms and information - [See their Advice & Support Centre website here.](#)



NHS Wales Pregnancy Pathway - What to expect & when to expect it

While your midwife will provide as much information as possible about your pregnancy, the pathway of care, expected scan and due dates and much more, this can be an exceptional amount of information to take in.

NHS Wales 111 has a dedicated [Online Pregnancy Guide](#) - not only does this cover things mentioned above, but also common questions and concerns. We recommend engaging with this detailed resource as it can help you prepare, as well as putting your mind at ease.

Immigration & UK National Health Service (NHS) Access for Students

If you are an International Student and you, or a family member, are or have become pregnant, it is extremely important that you understand and manage healthcare arrangements during pregnancy and beyond. This is crucial, not just for the pregnant party, but also any, as yet, unborn children.

Whether payment is required to access the NHS depends on the type of immigration that the pregnant person has.

Student Visa and Dependent Visa holders who have paid Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS):

If the pregnant person has a Student Route or Student Dependent Visa, which included paying the Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS), they will have full free-of-charge access to NHS services.

Short-term / Visit Visa holders and/or those who have NOT paid the Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS):

If the pregnant person is on a non-IHS visa route (e.g. a standard Visit Visa), they will not have free NHS services. It is not possible to 'buy' access to the NHS if you are on a non-IHS route visa.

It is vital to understand that for these students/family members, NHS services, including pre-natal and childbirth, will be charged. Failure to pay NHS charges may jeopardise future visa applications. Childbirth charges vary, but start from around £6,000 if there are no complications.

If this is the situation for you or your family members, you will need to advise any doctors or other NHS service staff of your non-IHS status. They can then provide you with a realistic understanding of the charges which might be incurred during your support or treatment.

If the pregnant individual is not covered by the IHS, it is vitality important that either adequate private health insurance is arranged, which will cover all possible medical eventualities, or that a sufficient amount of money is available to cover for any potential medical issues.

Although many insurance providers do not require you to disclose that you are pregnant, you should absolutely check and confirm this at point of purchase and make sure you fully understand what their policy will cover. This applies both if you are already pregnant before travelling to the UK or if you/a family member becomes pregnant while in the UK.

Specialist cover can be arranged to cover costs which arise from unexpected complications and you should put this in place as soon as you can and, if possible, before you come to the UK.

IMPORTANT : HEALTHCARE FOR BABIES BORN IN THE UK

Please make sure you read and fully understand this section - it contains very important information about access to the NHS for children of Non-UK Nationals born in the UK

When a child is born in the UK they are **not automatically considered British Citizens**, unless at least one parent has British citizenship or Settled Status. This means that **babies born in the UK to non-British citizens are considered overseas visitors** until an immigration/visa application is granted.

For the first three months after birth, the child will have access to free-of-charge NHS care, however after this there is no further automatic entitlement. Therefore **babies aged older than three months are not exempt from NHS charges** and will have to either:

- **Apply for Leave to Remain as a dependant from within the UK**, including payment of the Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS). It is not possible to pay the Immigration Health Surcharge without making an immigration application at the same time OR
- **Leave the UK and apply for a dependant visa** including the Immigration Health Surcharge to re-enter the UK. A baby cannot re-enter the UK without valid immigration OR
- **Pay the NHS for any healthcare they receive after they are 3 months old** (charged at 100-150% the NHS national tariff dependant on Nationality).

Please see Page 10 - Immigration for babies born in the UK section for important information regarding regulating a UK born baby's immigration status.

Registering Your Babies Birth

When a child is born in Wales or England, their **birth must be officially registered within 42 days**. This is a legal requirement - regardless of the nationality of parents. Full information about this process can be found at the [UK Government Birth Register Information Site](#).

Registering a birth is a free-of-charge service provided by all local authorities at the local Register Office. In the Swansea University region there are Register Offices in:

- Swansea - [Swansea Council Register Office Website](#) - Phone 01792 637444
- Neath Port Talbot - [NPT Council Register Office Website](#) - Phone 01639 760020

You **must make an appointment to visit the Register Office - there is no 'walk-in' service available**. Details on what you will need to take with you, what information you need to provide, and the overall process can be found on the websites above - please ensure you read these and prepare.

Failure to comply with this legal requirement may lead to action being taken by the UK Government, such as fines, and also can cause significant issues when you need to apply for a passport or other permission for the child to travel.

Immigration information for Students & Babies

Student Immigration implications relating to pregnancy & childbirth

Mandatory Leave of Absence

All students who have a baby during their studies are required to take a **mandatory 2 week leave of absence** after the birth, so you will not be expected to undertake any study during this time.

Extending your Leave of Absence

If a student wishes to take a short temporary leave of absence *longer than* the mandatory two weeks, they may be able to do so with the approval of their Faculty. To make these arrangements you would need to speak to the Faculty Support Team as early as possible to discuss their options, however this may affect your Visa as detailed below.

If you hold a Student Route Visa, under UKVI (UK Visa and Immigration) regulations, any absence from studies **should not exceed 60 days** and the student must still be able to complete their studies within the period of their existing visa.

So, if the requested temporary leave of absence is longer than 60 days, or requires a visa extension, students who have a Student Route (or Tier 4) visa would be required to **suspend studies and return home** until they are ready to resume their studies.

Student Route visas holders cannot extend their visa in the UK for reasons of pregnancy or maternity.

The University is legally required to report all suspensions, including those due to pregnancy, to the UKVI. The UKVI will then undertake mandatory curtailment action - cancelling/shortening the visa. This will mean that **the student will need to apply for a new Student Route visa in their home country** before returning to resume their studies. Information on making a Student Route visa application from overseas can be found on the [University website here](#).

All requests to suspend studies for pregnancy or parental leave must be made to Faculties in good time to permit time for approval of the request and to ensure travel home can be made following the report of the suspension to the UKVI.

In all cases, advice should be sought from the Student Compliance Services Team via Studentattendance@swansea.ac.uk as early as possible (especially in the case of a pregnancy) to ensure compliance with the Student visa (formally known as Tier 4) can be maintained.

Should you have queries or concerns, contact the VISA Advice Team.

Immigration Information for Babies Born in the UK

The UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA) provides the following information about immigration matters for children born to Students and their dependent partners in the UK:

Birth in the UK **does not automatically make a baby a British citizen**. The baby needs to have a parent with British citizenship or settled status in the UK in order to be born British. If your baby is born in the UK but is not a British citizen, it is quite lawful for him or her to remain in the UK without making an immigration application. However, the baby will need immigration permission to re-enter the UK after any travel abroad.

For babies born to Students (on student route visa), there are limited instances when the baby can apply for immigration permission as your dependent. A child, born anywhere, can apply for immigration permission as your dependent if:

- You meet the criteria described in categories 1, 2 or 3 on the UKCISA webpage ["Can I have dependents when I study in the UK?"](#).
- The child was born during your current permission as a Student, and this permission was granted for a full-time course of at least six months (or, if you have permission for a re-sit or to re-take a module for the same course of at least six months duration, the child was born during the permission for the original course or during the permission for the re-sit or re-take).
- The child was born no more than three months after the expiry of your most recent permission and the child is making an entry clearance application (an application from their country of residence) within six months of their parent's most recent permission

If you find you need to interrupt/suspend your studies due to pregnancy/giving birth, you and any dependents will normally need to leave the UK, then apply for new entry clearance in order to return to the UK and resume studies. Full information on how to apply for a dependent visa from in or outside the UK can be found on the [VISA Advice Dependents Webpages](#)

It is extremely important to note that babies older than three months who were born in the UK are deemed to be overseas visitors until an immigration/visa application is granted. Therefore babies aged 3 months and older will not be exempt from NHS charges and will have to either:

- Pay the NHS for any healthcare they receive after they are 3 months old (charged at 100-150% the NHS national tariff dependant on Nationality) OR
- Leave the UK and apply for a dependant visa (which includes the Immigration Health Surcharge) to re-enter the UK. A baby cannot re-enter the UK without valid immigration- irrespective of where they were born. OR
- Apply for Leave to Remain as a dependant from within the UK which includes the Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS) payment. It is not possible to pay the Immigration Health Surcharge in the UK without making an immigration application at the same time.

If you need advice or support with making any student/dependent immigration applications once you are in Swansea, then please [contact the VISA Advice Team](#) who will be able to provide guidance and assistance.

Travelling during Pregnancy or with Infants

We are aware that some people may elect to travel to the UK while pregnant. If you or your dependents are considering this, please read this information to help you decide whether travelling to the UK is the right choice at this stage of the pregnancy.

Flying while Pregnant

Your health and safety, and that of your dependents, is always our number one concern. Flying while pregnant can pose some risks to both the pregnant person and the baby. Guidance from the UK NHS, USA Centre for Disease Control, and the International Air Transport Association (IATA) generally agrees that:

- If you have a single pregnancy with no complications, flying is safe up to 36 weeks.
- If you have a multiple pregnancy, or have complications, flying is safe up to 32 weeks.

It's also recommended that anyone planning to fly while pregnant seeks medical advice from a doctor before travelling - regardless of the stage of pregnancy - and checks airline rules in advance.

Every airline sets their own rules for passengers travelling while pregnant. If you choose to travel while pregnant, it is essential you check the rules of the airlines well in advance. Some will require you to provide medical confirmation of fitness to fly. For example:

- [Qatar Airways](#) requires advance completion of a clearance process and a doctor's certificate for all pregnancies from 29 weeks on [Expectant mothers | Qatar Airways](#)
- [British Airways](#) does not allow anyone over 36 weeks pregnant (for a single pregnancy) or 32 weeks for a multiple pregnancy to travel on their flights. If you are below this, pregnant passengers are advised to carry a doctors certificate when travelling. [Medical conditions and pregnancy | Special Assistance | British Airways](#)
- [Delta Airlines](#) have no restrictions on travelling while pregnant or requirements for certificate – but do recommend checking with your doctor before travel - [Special Circumstances - Overview \(delta.com\)](#)
- [Virgin Atlantic](#) require a Doctors' Certificate from the 28th Week of pregnancy, and do not allow anyone over 36 weeks pregnant (for a single pregnancy) or 32 weeks for a multiple pregnancy to travel on their flights - [Medical Conditions | Medical Clearance To Fly | Virgin Atlantic](#)
- [Finnair](#) have different requirements for different flight durations, however require a doctors certificate for anyone 32+ weeks pregnant where the flight is over 6 hours [Travelling while pregnant | Finnair](#)
- [Lufthansa](#) permit travel up to 36 weeks for single pregnancies without complications and 32 weeks for multiple pregnancies without complications. They also recommend completion of doctors certificate after 28 weeks [available from their website.](#)

- [Emirates](#) Do not permit travel after 36 weeks for Single and 32 weeks for Multiple pregnancies (passengers with an urgent need to travel can apply for medical exemption via the [Emirates Website](#)). They require a medical certificate from a Doctor or Midwife after 29th week stating:
 - Confirmation of Single or Multiple Pregnancy
 - There are no complications
 - Estimated date of delivery
 - Latest date doctor expects fitness to travel
 - Pregnant person is in good health
 - No known reason to prevent pregnant person from flying

The above information was correct at time of writing – you must check the airline’s information for the most up-to-date rules.

You should not try to travel without following the airline’s rules – airline staff are trained and expected to approach passengers who appear to be in a late-stage of pregnancy. Without the right information or clearance, **it is highly likely you will be refused travel.**

If your journey involves more than one flight, **check the rules for each airline you will travel with.** For example, if you fly with KLM to Amsterdam, then on to London with British Airways, you must follow the rules for both airlines to ensure you can reach your planned destination without issues.



Travelling with New-Born and Infant Children

If you are planning to travel close to your due date, or shortly after birth, please make sure you check on any rules and regulations about travelling with a new-born baby.

Airlines in particular have varying rules and regulations, for example British Airways and Virgin Atlantic will accept a child from 48 hours after birth, however Emirates and Delta do not permit children under 7 days old on their flights.

You will also need to ensure your child has proper travel documents along with any required immigration status before you begin travel. In addition we recommend that, if travelling shortly after giving birth or with a new-born child, you seek medical advice from your doctor before travelling.

Onward Travel to Swansea University

The journey to the UK might seem like the most important part of your travel, however you also need to plan how you will get to Swansea from your point of arrival. This is especially important during pregnancy where multiple changes or long journeys can be especially difficult.

If you are arriving in the afternoon / evening, think about booking a hotel at your point of arrival. It can take anywhere from 30 minutes to 4 hours to collect baggage and complete immigration. At this point, taking a further journey to Swansea will likely see you arriving late at night with limited support available.

Travel to Swansea from most UK airports can take several hours. Plan your journey well in advance and remember that the quickest route might not be the best option. For example, if arriving at London Heathrow, the quickest journey is by [train](#) (around 4 hours). However, this can involve up to three changes of train, and at least one bus or taxi journey on arrival into Swansea.

[National Express](#) or [Megabus](#) coaches take around 5 hours, but with no changes you can board at the airport and leave at Swansea Bus Station, which has great onward connections. Gatwick is similar – trains take around 5 hours with multiple changes, coaches take around 6 hours.

For more information see the [VISA Advice UK Travel & Accommodation Guide](#)



Travel Insurance

When travelling you **must ensure you have an adequate amount of insurance cover**. This is especially important if you or someone travelling with you are pregnant.

Many insurance providers do not require you to disclose pregnancy, you should check with the provider – and what their policy will cover. For example, if you suffer complications related to your pregnancy during travel and need medical treatment, they would usually be covered. However if you were to go into labour, without complications, late in your pregnancy, most insurers will not consider this to be a medical issue as this is something expected and which you were aware would occur - and you could be left with a bill for medical care.

Specialist cover can be arranged to cover such costs, you should put this in place as soon as you can, and if possible before your travel begins.

This is particularly important for International Students (and dependents) on a short-term visit using a UK Visit Visa. On a Visit Visa, you have no right to free NHS care – this means any NHS services you access, including relating to pregnancy and childbirth, will be chargeable - See page 7 for information.

Luggage and Personal Belongings

We know from experience that students travelling to Swansea from outside the UK often bring a large amount of luggage with them, which is understandable. If there are also dependents travelling, this will again require more baggage - this can be difficult, especially if this includes a child who isn't able to manage their own bags.

The difficulty of travelling with a large amount of luggage can cause issues and added stress, which is less than ideal. If you or a member of your travelling party are pregnant, this can make the situation extremely challenging on all those involved.

Plan your belongings carefully and **remember many essential items can be purchased in the UK**. If it is a possibility, you may want to ask a friend or family member to travel with you to help you during the journey.

Finally, **check the allowances of all transport providers**. This includes airlines as well as train or coach companies. They may not be the same for all parts of your journey.



Delays and Disruptions

No matter how well you plan your journey, it could be disrupted. This can be a very frustrating and upsetting experience. This can again be an even more difficult situation to handle if travelling with dependents or if you or a member of your party are pregnant.

We strongly advise you to **secure a good level of travel insurance**, to **plan your journey with plenty of time to absorb a delay**, and to **travel well before your enrolment date**. You should also make sure you have enough money available to cover any emergency expenses you might need to pay - for example if you need to change pre-booked tickets there may be a charge, or you may need an unexpected hotel for a night.



Accommodation & Living Cost Information

The University does not have, and is unable to find, specific accommodation for pregnant students. It is a student's responsibility to source their own accommodation which is suited to their personal needs.

If you are already pregnant or have an infant when you travel to the UK, please do not make the assumption that the University or community will find accommodation for you when you arrive. This is not the case, and realisation can cause significant distress. Most student accommodation providers do not accept children of any age at their properties, and these may also not be suitable for a pregnant person. This is coupled with a current Swansea/UK family accommodation crisis, meaning that accommodation is both scarce and extremely expensive.

You must plan your accommodation carefully, **and make every effort to do this before you travel to the UK**. Make sure the property is suitable for you during pregnancy, and after you have given birth. If you know that you are pregnant, you should discuss this with accommodation providers/landlords/potential housemates before signing a contract to avoid future difficulties.

If you are already in Swansea and have existing accommodation you should speak to your accommodation provider, or housemates, once you are confident the pregnancy will be continuing to full term:

- If you are staying at Swansea University accommodation such as Singleton or Bay Campus Halls or Beck House, [contact the accommodation team](#) as soon as possible
- If you live at a Student Accommodation facility (such as Crown Place / Seren / Student Roost), you should contact them directly – many contact details can be found [on this webpage](#).
- If you have arranged Private Rented Accommodation – for example your own, or a shared, house or flat – you should contact your landlord or letting agency. If you are in shared accommodation, we also recommend you speak to your housemates.

It is again important to be aware that, if you become pregnant during your studies and are staying in student accommodation, you will likely need to find new accommodation. While the university can offer support relating to your studies **we are not able to locate or secure accommodation for you**. It is vital that you find suitable accommodation **as soon as possible**.



Family Suitable Accommodation

Within the Swansea University area, and across the UK, there is currently a severe shortage of family suitable rental accommodation. As a result of the shortage and a huge increase in demand, the cost of rental properties has increased to extremely high levels - the average UK rent is now the highest it has ever been, and this is not likely to change in the near future.

Securing accommodation can be difficult at the best of times, but when combined with the added pressures of study and pregnancy, this can be extremely challenging. This is why we advise that you make sure to **find accommodation as a priority - and again if possible make every effort to arrange this before you travel.**

While options are limited, we have provided some useful guidance around securing housing in our UK Travel and Accommodation Guide [which you can download here](#)

It is really important that you read and understand this and be aware that it is highly likely you will need to secure Private Rented Accommodation. You should also consider the additional financial costs that may be involved with private rented accommodation.



UK Cost of Living

Swansea is a relatively low-cost place to live compared to major UK cities, however it may be considerably more expensive than you are currently used to. It is also important to know that the UK is experiencing high inflation and significant price fluctuations across most goods and services.

Many students are surprised to find their money does not go as far as they had expected after they arrive. Budgeting is crucial - if you are travelling to the UK while pregnant, you should plan your budget in advance. If you become pregnant while in the UK, you should reassess your finances to make sure you are able to support yourself and your baby.

To help inform you, we have a dedicated [UK Living Costs site](#). Please make sure you consider this when making any plans, and be aware that you may also need to pay [childcare fees](#).

The [Moneyhelper website](#) has a number of useful tools, including a [Baby Cost Calculator](#), [Childcare Cost](#) advice and other useful resources - but please be aware that student visa holders and dependants are not usually entitled to claim benefits.

Some students do end up in a position of financial hardship as they have not realistically budgeted. This can be even more difficult when you are pregnant or have a small child. You should also look at the [Money Advice](#) pages for information on finances and budgeting.

Childcare & Schooling

There are many things you'll need to do during pregnancy to make sure you are prepared for the arrival of the baby. One of those is to plan and arrange childcare for when you return to your studies. You must make sure you have confirmed these arrangements and are confident that your child will have sufficient care and support while you are at University before you return to your course.

Children on Campus - Swansea University Policy

In our experience, students with new-born children who have not made adequate care arrangements have attempted to bring their children into the university with them, including to teaching and learning environments such as lectures and labs.

While the University fully supports students through pregnancy and parenthood, it is important to realise that **the presence of children in these environments can be disruptive, and may pose a safety risk.**

As a result of this, Swansea University has a dedicated [Children on Campus Policy](#) which makes it clear what is and isn't permitted in terms of the presence of children on campuses:

- Children of any age are not permitted at lectures, seminars, or other teaching activities – including any teaching and learning events that happen off campus.
- Children are welcome to visit public areas such as café's, shops, reception areas and others, for short infrequent visits, but all children must always be with a responsible adult

You should not plan on caring for you child by bringing them to campus with you. The university is not designed for children, and these rules are in place to ensure the health and safety of students, staff and children.



Arranging Childcare & Schooling in Wales

In Wales, the government provides a free childcare provision for children over 3 years of age – however **for children under 3, childcare is the responsibility of the child's parents or guardians**. This means that, once you are ready to return to your studies, you must make sure that you have planned and arranged adequate care for your child.

You should also be aware that pre-school care such as nurseries and child-minders are usually services that **parents must pay for with their own finances**. Often this is not something that forms part of a budget, but childcare services can be a significant cost.

It is important to know that, in the UK, **you cannot take a child to a school, nursery or other childcare facility unless you have already arranged a place for them**. This results in the child being turned away, and it can be a very difficult situation for all involved.

To help you plan, prepare and budget for your childcare needs, we have a dedicated web resource. We recommend you make use of this, you can find it at:

[VISA Advice UK Schools & Childcare Guide - Swansea University](#)



Welsh Government Additional Childcare Support

The Welsh Government does offer some additional childcare support services, but these are subject to specific criteria and is not automatically available for everyone. You can find information on these services below, and you should check to see if you are eligible with the providers directly:

- [Welsh Government Childcare Offer for Wales](#) - This offers up to 30 hours a week of childcare to parents and guardians of children subject to eligibility criteria.
- [Wales Flying Start Scheme](#) - This provides additional childcare and parenting support to people living in specific areas of Wales. It is administered by each local authority's Family Information Service. For Swansea, [click here](#). For Neath Port Talbot, [click here](#). If you are unsure of your region, [click here to go to the Family Information Service finder](#).

Support Services & Organisations

Swansea University Support Services

The University has a wide range of support services available for you to access, covering a huge range of areas. Take a look at the [Support & Wellbeing MyUni site](#) for full details of the services on offer.

The Safeguarding and Disclosure team provides practical advice and guidance to students as well as signposting to specialist support services. We encourage all students to take a look at the [advice pages](#) on our website, which cover a wide range of welfare-related matters including student pregnancy.

Discovering you or your partner are pregnant may have left you feeling a mix of emotions, you may be excited but also overwhelmed about the changes to come. We are committed to ensuring all students are supported and treated fairly with dignity and respect throughout their studies.

In the first instance, if you intend the pregnancy to continue to term, you should get in contact with your Faculty or College's Student Experience & Information Team. They will ensure you are fully aware of the support available to you, create a coordinated plan and arrange a risk assessment. You can find their details at - myuni.swansea.ac.uk/faculties

However, if you have any additional questions regarding your pregnancy and your options, we are here to support you no matter what decision you make. Please email safeguardingdisclosure@swansea.ac.uk

Support Services in Swansea, South Wales & the wider UK

Below you'll find a list of organisations, groups and services which may be useful should you, or anyone you know, become pregnant. The services cover a wide range of areas, from managing pregnancy, mental health, finances and supplies as well as services that can provide support should the pregnancy not continue to term for any reason.

Having the best possible support is an incredibly helpful when experiencing pregnancy or becoming a new parent – there is a vast amount available, and we encourage you to look into these and get in touch with any you feel might be beneficial. In particular, connecting with others who are in the same situation can be a really positive step to take.

Whether it is you who needs the support directly, or you are seeking help for a friend, dependent or family member, there is always help available.

For each organisation you will find:

- Name & Website Link
- Local or National - whether they are based locally in Swansea or across the UK
- Online or In-Person
- Telephone Number
- Description of Services
- Social Media Links

If you are aware of any other services, please email VISA.Advice@swansea.ac.uk

Swansea Bay University Health Board (SBUHB) Maternity Services

Local

In-Person & Online

Phone: 01792 205666

SBUHB provides NHS services for the Swansea Bay region, including Neath Port Talbot. This team also provides your Midwife care too, and they will provide direct information to you about the services available throughout your pregnancy and beyond.

You can find information online at their website, and there is also an active Facebook community that expectant and new parents can join this gives updates on what's happening in the area including workshops, meet-ups and more.

You can also access information at the following links:

- [Welcome to Swansea Bay Maternity Services](#)
- [Useful Links for your Pregnancy Journey & Beyond](#)
- [Accessing the Free Online Antenatal Service](#)

There is further information on local groups and activities on the final page of this guide



Swansea Pregnancy Advisory Service

Local

In-Person

Phone: 01792 200303

The Pregnancy Advisory Service provide an impartial, confidential service for anyone who has become pregnant and is unsure if they wish to continue with the pregnancy. They will provide information and advice, and can also signpost to other services including support workers to help make sure the right decision is made, and the right support is in place.

Wales Family Information Services

National & Local

Online

Phone: 01792 517222

The Family Information Service provides one central listing for childcare services and options across Wales. As well as this, it contains a listing of [Family Support Services](#) – organisations which provide support for families at all stages and in all circumstances. If you feel you need support, this is a great place to start your search. There are also local branches of the service available in most regions of Wales such as the [Swansea Family Information Service](#)



Keyhope Centre – supporting people impacted by abortion, miscarriage and stillbirth

Local

In-Person

Phone: 01792 773800

Keyhope provide a range of services for those circumstances where a pregnancy doesn't continue to term, or where a baby is stillborn. This includes counselling, general information and signposting for anyone who contacts them. This is offered both in-person and over the phone.

Sands

National

Online

Phone: 0808 164 3332

Sands is a support service available to anyone affected by pregnancy loss and the death of a baby, offering understanding and comfort. They provide a support line, forums, articles and references to many resources that can help those affected by the loss of a baby. You can also find online support groups and local groups too.



Tommy's - Together, for every baby.

National

Online

Phone: 0800 014 7800 (Pregnancy Line)

Working to help people through pregnancy and childbirth, giving advice and support and ensuring pregnancy is as safe as possible for mother and baby with a wide range of services and resources. Their staff and volunteers include midwives and other specialists, and their [Pregnancy Hub](#) provides a wide range of information on pregnancy and childbirth

Tommy's also provides specialist information for [Black and Black Mixed-Heritage people](#) through pregnancy and postnatal – there can be a higher number of complications during pregnancy for people of this background, and they provide direct support as well as numerous links to support organisations.



NCT

National

In-Person & Online

Phone: 0300 330 0700

NCT is the UK's leading charity working for Parents and families. You can find information relating to pregnancy, childbirth and infancy – their focus is on pregnancy and the first 1,000 days after birth. They have a wide range of online services, but also offer in-person courses and support groups too. This covers varied subjects from how to make sure you have an engaged social life after birth, to baby first aid and much more. It's also a great way to meet other people at the same stage as you. There are a range of local groups, including the [NCT Swansea District Branch](#) to connect you to people locally.



Peanut - Finding friends & Support

National

Online & In-Person

Peanut is an app-based online community of parents – be it pregnant, with children and those planning to have them. There are a range of forums, helpful advice guides and support services. This also allows you to find other people in your area who are at the same stage as you – this can help you make friends and make connections online and in-person.



[Parenting – Give it time – Welsh Government](#)

National

Online

The Welsh Government provides practical support, advice and guidance on childcare from birth onwards. This includes behavioural information, how to manage childcare and schooling, and help with unforeseen challenges. There is also a comprehensive list of additional support services available to parents in Wales too in the 'Support' section.



[Action For Children - Parent Talk](#)

National

Online

Action For Children is widely known for its work supporting children throughout the UK – however they also provide a highly supportive service for Parents and expectant parents too. The services are designed to help you navigate through various stages and circumstances of parenting – both in terms of practical information such as speech and potty training, and in emotional and wellbeing support. There is a dedicated service for Wales – [Parent Talk Cymru](#) - including live chat and phone services



[Family Lives](#)

National

Online

Phone: 0800 800 2222

Providing non-judgmental impartial support for parents of children of all ages, this network can help you at times of crisis and if you feel you don't know how to manage a situation. You can connect with live chat, by phone or through their network of forums where parents can support each-other.



[Baby Love Groups - Pregnancy to Toddler Support](#)

Local

In-Person

Phone: 07903 674253

BabyLove is a local organisation in Swansea dedicated to connecting expectant parents and those with young children together while providing education or social activities. This includes ante-natal classes, New Mums Club as well as many more meet-ups held across the city including in the City Centre, Llansamlet and Mumbles. It is a great opportunity to connect with others in the area.



[ABM – Association of Breastfeeding Mothers](#)

Local & National

In-Person & Online

Phone: 0300 100 0212

ABM is a charity dedicated to supporting breastfeeding parents and their families. Breastfeeding can present some real challenges, so their trained support network can be a real benefit. There are online and phone-based resources, but also local networks and groups. In Swansea groups are held in Singleton and other locations, the local group is at [ABM Swansea Facebook](#).



[BMHS – Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic Mental Health Support](#)

Local

In-Person & Online

Phone: 0800 144 8824

BMHS are a well-established and highly regarded support service operating in Swansea. They provide a wide mix of services and opportunities, including support groups, monthly meet-ups and trips, international student support and much more beyond their core Mental Health services.



[African Community Centre \(ACC\)](#)

Local

In-Person & Online

Phone: 0330 229 2995

The ACC is a group based in Swansea representing and supporting the African community. This includes group meet-ups, activities and more where those with African heritage can connect with one another and provide peer-to-peer support and friendship.



[Chinese in Wales Association \(CIWA\)](#)

Local

In-Person & Online

Phone: 01792 469919

CIWA are based in Swansea's Grand Theatre. They provide a unique resource to people in Wales who are from, or have heritage from, China. They offer many services with one of their main aims being to enhance community and make sure people can connect with one another in meetups and events.

