



Initial information for pregnant or breastfeeding students

1. Notification of pregnancy

Technical University of Darmstadt would like to assist you. It is therefore important that you communicate your pregnancy. A form is available for this purpose, which you need to fill out together with your Office for Student Affairs. We can only ensure that you will not experience any disadvantages in your studies and examinations if you inform us about your pregnancy.

It is best to talk to the examiner in advance and to clarify possible individual solutions or alternative forms of examination. In any case, a feasible solution that is as favourable as possible for all parties involved will be sought in consultation with you, the examination board and the examiner.

If you are a pregnant student studying Teaching at Secondary Schools, please contact the Centre for Teacher Education (ZfL). You need to inform them first. Your notification will then be forwarded by the ZfL.

The departments' Offices for Student Affairs offer field-specific advice and can discuss suitable adjustment options to the progression of your studies with you as necessary.

In the case of School Practical Studies (practical phases at a school as a place of learning), please note that school administrators are required to inform student teachers about infectious diseases (this includes checking the student teachers' current vaccination status, for instance against a rubella infection). Students who are not adequately protected cannot complete their practical phase at the respective school.

2. Risk Assessment

Adjustments to the progression of your studies become necessary if there are courses and events that pose a health risk to you or your child. This applies, for example, to technical and scientific degree programmes and related activities in the laboratory, or to working with children during practical phases at school.

The risk assessment is done by the Offices for Student Affairs. The **persons responsible for teaching (lecturers)** need to be consulted to clarify whether their respective course falls within the scope of Section 1 Par. 2 sentence 2 No. 8 MuSchG (*Mutterschutzgesetz* – Maternity Protection Act). This includes checking for potential hazards to you (e.g., due to chemical hazardous substances, biological agents, or harmful physical factors such as radiation, vibration or noise),

and determining to what extent these potential hazards can be reduced by taking suitable protective measures.

3. Waiver of your maternity protection rights

The Maternity Protection Act takes into account the special situation of students. It allows you to waive maternity protection in certain situations, for instance, to attend courses between 8:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. We rely on your good judgement here. You can obtain the waiver form and appropriate advice from the Office for Student Affairs.

4. Content and consequences of the waiver

If you explicitly declare to the Office for Student Affairs that you waive your maternity protection rights during the period of maternity protection and/or breastfeeding, certain restrictions do not apply to you (courses between 8:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. or on Sundays and public holidays). You can revoke this waiver at any time with effect for the future.

5. Reasonable accommodation

Unfair disadvantages in the progression of your studies due to pregnancy, childbirth or breastfeeding are to be prevented or accommodated for. In this respect, the Office for Student Affairs will advise you and indicate available options for reasonable accommodation. Please keep in mind that alternative forms of examination/reasonable accommodation refer only to the period of maternity protection.

6. Examinations

When a pregnancy is reported, the periods of maternity protection must be observed. This takes effect immediately upon notification and generally applies to all examinations/courses up until the end of the period of maternity protection. Until then, you are free to withdraw from the examination provided that you can present proof of your pregnancy.

In the case of homework assignments, presentations, etc., the deadlines for submission will generally be extended as far as the nature of the assignment allows. Since it makes little sense, for example, to give a presentation after the end of the course, it may become necessary to look for an alternative form of examination.

If no extension of the deadline is possible according to the degree programme regulations (e.g., architecture), invoking your maternity protection rights has the same effect as a withdrawal.

When invoking maternity protection, this will put your work on your thesis on hold immediately. (The University assumes that you will not continue working on your thesis during the period of maternity protection.) Consequently, the time set for completing your thesis will be extended by the period of maternity protection (beginning 6 weeks before and ending 8 weeks (in case of multiple birth 12 weeks) after delivery). In case of a miscarriage, different periods of maternity protection apply. If maternity protection is waived (refer to 3.), the normal completion time applies.

You can also declare at any time that you wish to take part in an examination (refer to 3.). You can 'change your mind' any time and as often as you wish.

7. Legal consequences of examination discontinuation

Since the declaration to waive your maternity protection rights can be revoked at any time for the future, this also has an influence on the assessment of an examination discontinuation.

A confirmed and reported pregnancy must therefore be regarded as a reason for withdrawal. In the case of such a justified withdrawal from the examination, the examination attempt will not be counted.

8. Periods of breastfeeding

If you wish to breastfeed your child during an examination, it is best to inform the examiner in advance so that an appropriate completion time extension can be arranged.

Generally, there is no extension for periods of breastfeeding during the thesis (*Abschlussarbeit*). However, there is the option to apply for extensions of the deadline according to the general regulations (case-by-case decision).

Dissertations (doctoral theses) are not bound to specific deadlines. The general 5-year period for working on dissertations according to Section 10(5) PO/AT is extended by the periods of maternity protection and the periods of parental leave according to Section 15 BEEG (*Bundeselternzeitgesetz – Parental Allowances and Parental Leave Act*).

9. Course attendance

Lecturers are not automatically informed about pregnant students in their courses. The information provided to lecturers depends on the risk assessment. We recommend that you inform your lecturers about your pregnancy yourself (refer to 2.).

If, in exceptional cases, attendance is compulsory in a course, alternative options need to be provided, if possible. To this end, please contact your Office for Student Affairs.

10. Separately scheduled examination

According to Section 19(1) APB, a separately scheduled examination date can be requested from the examination board.

11. Leave of absence

Pregnancy is a reason for leave of absence according to Section 18(1)(3.) ESO (*Einschreibeordnung – Enrolment Regulations*) of TU Darmstadt. However, during a leave of absence, registering for and taking part in examinations is possible by way of exception only. Please contact your Office for Student Affairs for this as well.

Contact person:

- For all questions regarding your studies, please contact your Office for Student Affairs.
- For questions regarding leave of absence, please contact Directorate II, Student Service (Karo 5). Karo 5, Counter 2, Karolinenplatz 5, 64289 Darmstadt

https://www.tu-darmstadt.de/studieren/studieren_von_a_bis_z/artikel_details_de_en_41792.en.jsp,
studierendenservice@tu-darmstadt.de

- You can ask for advice on studying as a parent from Directorate II:

https://www.teilzeitstudium.tu-darmstadt.de/studieren_mit_kind_1/studieren_mit_kind_3/index.en.jsp

- For questions regarding the risk assessment and the notification process to the council of the administrative district of Darmstadt, please contact the Senior Occupational Safety Specialist at Directorate IV– arbeitssicherheit@zv.tu-darmstadt.de.

https://www.intern.tu-darmstadt.de/verwaltung/dez_iv/referate_und_stabsstellen/artikel_details_de_en_229824.en.jsp

Dated: 01 June 2025