



Breastfeeding at UTS: Guideline

Introduction

UTS is committed to supporting the inclusion of all parents and carers in our community. This includes flexibility and support to enable individuals who are breastfeeding or expressing breastmilk to effectively work and study on campus and to participate in campus-related activities.

The Department of Health and Aged Care's infant feeding guidelines recommend exclusive breastfeeding of infants to around six months of age and continued breastfeeding until the age of 12 months and beyond, if desired¹. We recognize that not all individuals choose, or are able, to breastfeed.

While all individuals are welcome to breastfeed on UTS campuses, this Guideline aims to provide information and guidance to UTS staff and students on support that is available at the University for breastfeeding parents and outlines the legal rights and protections for breastfeeding as set out in state and federal anti-discrimination law.

All **UTS staff** are required to:

- read and abide by these Guidelines, related UTS policies and legislation;
- accommodate reasonable requests by staff and students under their supervision for lactation breaks and flexible work arrangements;
- take reasonable care to ensure work, health and safety requirements relating to breastfeeding are addressed (detailed advice can be sought from the Wellbeing team in the People Unit).

Definitions

Breastfeeding: For the purpose of this document, this term refers to directly breastfeeding a child, or expressing breastmilk.

Lactation break: A break taken by a breastfeeding staff member or student to breastfeed a child, express breastmilk and/or undertake any other breastfeeding-related activity during normal working hours or scheduled study commitments.

Parents' Room: Specific room designated for breastfeeding or expressing breastmilk.

Scope

This Guideline applies to UTS staff and students wishing to breastfeed at the University, unless otherwise specified in this document.

This includes (but is not limited to):

- Staff and students on parental leave or returning to work/study after parental leave;
- Staff and students who are new to the University and are breastfeeding;
- Pre-adoptive staff or students who would like to establish a milk supply.

¹ Department of Health <http://www.health.gov.au/breastfeeding>



Guidelines

Infant feeding on campus

UTS supports the right to breastfeed in public and welcomes breastfeeding across our campus. Dedicated Parents' Rooms are available at the University for the privacy and comfort of those who wish to use them.

There are however, some premises where breastfeeding is not allowed for health and safety reasons such as labs where there is a risk of exposure to chemical or biological hazards.

In line with the *Staff and Students with Carer Responsibilities Policy*, permission must be sought to bring a child to campus. For:

- **Students**, permission to bring children to class is at the discretion of the lecturer, though any reasonable request should be granted.
- **Staff** must similarly seek approval from the relevant supervisor to bring children to work, and such requests should be treated sympathetically.

UTS provides staff, students and visitors who breastfeed or express breast milk with access to appropriate facilities that are clean, hygienic, and accessible. See **Attachment 1** for locations of facilities that include a:

- private space (either via a lockable door or curtain);
- chair for use when breastfeeding or expressing;
- small table;
- power point;
- sink and hand washing facilities.

Some rooms also include nappy change facilities, a refrigerator/freezer and lockable storage.

All individuals using these rooms should be considerate of other users and take reasonable care to leave them clean and tidy.

UTS will continue to consider the provision of further parents' and breastfeeding/expressing rooms when new facilities are being planned and developed.

Storing breastmilk and expressing equipment

UTS staff and students may choose to store breastmilk in a UTS refrigerator/freezer within a Parents' Room (where a refrigerator/freezer is available) or by local area agreement in another UTS refrigerator/freezer.

It is the responsibility of the **staff** member or **student** to:

- ensure containers storing breastmilk are covered with a lid;
- each container is clearly labelled with their name, date collected and telephone number;
- remove any breastmilk from the refrigerator/freezer at the conclusion of their work/study day.

Staff and students are able to store expressing equipment such as a breast pump at UTS within Parents' Rooms (where lockable storage is available) or in locked storage within their work unit. If stored at UTS, all equipment should be clearly labelled with the staff member or student's name and telephone number.



Breastmilk that is left in a UTS refrigerator/freezer overnight without a label or for an extended period or equipment that is unclaimed by its owner, may be discarded.

The security of personal items stored in the room (e.g., breast pump or breastmilk), cannot be guaranteed.

Lactation breaks

The University offers UTS staff and students the flexibility to take lactation breaks during their work or study day. Lactation breaks are available to:

- **Staff** should speak to their supervisor and agree when they can take a break to breastfeed/ express breastmilk. No staff member will lose pay due to taking lactation breaks, however staff should consider both the needs of their work unit and their personal needs when determining the timing for lactation breaks.
- **Supervisors** should support breastfeeding staff to take the time they need to breastfeed and/or express breastmilk, but in most circumstances, this is simply a matter of providing flexibility to re-organise existing breaks (e.g., lunch breaks and tea breaks). In circumstances where it is not possible to breastfeed/ express breastmilk during existing breaks, sufficient flexibility must be provided so that the staff member can make up the time.
- **Students** who need to incorporate breastfeeding and/or expressing with their study commitments. The timing of lactation breaks should be negotiated between the student and relevant supervisor, lecturer, or tutor.

There may be variations in the number of times an individual will need to feed or express and for what duration, depending on the breastfeeding person's needs and the needs of the child.

Therefore, the breaks an individual is entitled to take during work or study hours will reflect what is reasonable in their individual circumstances.

There may also be variations in the period of time for which an individual chooses to breastfeed their child. UTS will endeavour to provide support to the individual for whatever period they chose to breastfeed.

Flexible work / study options

A breastfeeding **staff** member may wish to negotiate a [flexible work arrangement](#) in addition to taking lactation breaks. A flexible working arrangement may involve a change in hours of work, pattern of work or location of work. UTS is supportive of staff working flexibly in hybrid working arrangements (working part week on-campus and part week remotely from an off-campus location). In general, flexible work arrangements should be negotiated between a staff member and their immediate supervisor, in line with the relevant Enterprise Agreement, considering both the individual staff member and work unit's needs.

Breastfeeding **students** can request flexible arrangements to support them with meeting their course requirements in relation to course work, assessment and practical work or clinical placement. Students should consult their lecturer or supervisor directly, or the Academic Liaison Officer (ALO) in their faculty to make arrangements for assignments or exams, or other assistance required to support them with their studies.



Breastfeeding Rights and Responsibilities

Protection from unlawful discrimination or harassment

Federal and state anti-discrimination legislation including the Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Commonwealth) and the Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW) provides protection against discrimination on the grounds of breastfeeding. Examples of unlawful discrimination on the grounds of breastfeeding in the workplace may include:

- failing to allow an employee to breastfeed and/or to express milk;
- failing to make reasonable adjustments for lactation breaks in order to facilitate breastfeeding.

UTS will not tolerate any form of discrimination or harassment against individuals who choose to breastfeed. For more information about, concerns or complaints about harassment or discrimination on the grounds of breastfeeding, staff and students should contact the Centre for Social Justice & Inclusion on 9515 1084 or email equity@uts.edu.au.

Responsibilities of students, staff and supervisors

UTS is committed to a positive, ethical and inclusive culture, consistent with its values. All students and staff have a responsibility to contribute to the achievement of a respectful productive, safe, and equitable study and work environment at UTS by avoiding practices that lead to, support, or condone discrimination or harassment as detailed in the *Equity, Inclusion and Respect Policy*.

All **students** and **staff** are required to treat their colleagues and fellow students who are breastfeeding with respect and refrain from any discriminatory behaviour. **Managers** and **supervisors** are further accountable for ensuring that staff and students understand their rights and responsibilities in relation to these Guidelines and related UTS Policies.

This responsibility extends to all members of the UTS community including:

- students (local, international and exchange students);
- academic and support staff (including continuing, contract or casual, visiting appointments, guest lecturers);
- sub-contractors working on campus;
- visitors to UTS; and
- people external to UTS who students or staff interact with as part of their work or study - for example during work experience, industrial or clinical placements, exchanges, or work-based learning units.

Further Information and Assistance

For security access to locked UTS Parents' Rooms, contact Security on 9514-1192 (or ext. 1192).

Students and **staff** members who need regular access can contact Security on the above number or at security.access@uts.edu.au to have access added to their UTS staff or student card.

Visitors to UTS who need access to locked expressing and breastfeeding can also contact Security (on the above number) who will send a guard to open the door or unlock it remotely.



For information or advice to support breastfeeding staff and students, or to discuss an equity-related (i.e., discrimination or harassment) query, concern or complaint contact the UTS Centre for Social Justice and Inclusion on 9514-1084 or equity@uts.edu.au.

For general repair and maintenance issues for UTS Parents' Rooms lodge a building maintenance request by phoning ext. 7477/7476 from a university phone or 9514-7477/7476 from an external phone; or if you are a staff member, by using the building maintenance request form on Staff Connect.

For accessibility requirements related to UTS Parents' Rooms (e.g., if you have access requirements that are not met:

- lodge a building maintenance request by phoning ext. 7477/7476 from a university phone or 9514-7477/7476 from an external phone; or if you are a staff member, by using the building maintenance request form on Staff Connect or
- contact the UTS Centre for Social Justice and Inclusion on 9514-1084 or equity@uts.edu.au .

For more information about breastfeeding at work contact the Australian Breastfeeding Association (ABA). The ABA has trained breastfeeding counsellors who are available via the National Breastfeeding Helpline 7 days per week to provide information to assist women with their breastfeeding concerns and questions about how to combine breastfeeding and return to work. Contact 1800686268 or visit www.breastfeeding.asn.au

Related policies and guidelines

- [UTS Equity, Inclusion and Respect Policy](#)
- [Staff and Students with Carer Responsibilities Policy](#)
- [Flexible Work Arrangements](#) on Staff Connect Work/Life balance pages
- [UTS Enterprise Agreements](#)



Attachment 1: List of Parents' Rooms on campus (as of April 2024):

Broadway/Ultimo:

- CB07.03.027 *
- CB01.05.05B *
- CB10.11.100
- CB01.13.048 (Nappy change table not available in this room).
- CB02.03.175

Moore Park:

- MP01.03.71

*Note: These rooms may be easier for visitors to access due to their location. CB01.05.05B is most accessible by visitors as security card access is not required unless outside of standard University hours.

Version history

Version	Approved by	Approval date	Effective date	Sections modified
1.0	Anne Dwyer, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Corporate Services)	15 January 2019	15 January 2019	
2.0	Jo Tilly, Director Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, Centre for Social Justice and Inclusion	4 June 2024	4 June	All