***Model letter for departments to acknowledge notification of maternity leave***

*The department must respond within 28 days of receipt of an employee’s notification of her pregnancy by the qualifying week and her completion of the maternity leave plan.*

Dear [*name of employee*],

Thank you for telling me about your pregnancy and the date that your baby is due. This letter is just to confirm the details of your maternity leave and pay.

As we have discussed, new mothers are eligible for up to 52 weeks maternity leave. *(include one the options (i) to (iv) below)*

*(i)For those who plan to return to work after leave* ***and*** *have 26 weeks service at the qualifying week:*

With regard to pay during this leave you will be eligible for the University’s contractual maternity pay scheme, and for statutory maternity pay to be paid to you by the University. You are therefore entitled to up of 26 weeks’ maternity leave at full pay (which will include any statutory payments due to you), followed by 13 weeks for which Statutory Maternity Pay only is due and a further 13 weeks’ unpaid maternity leave.

OR (ii) *For those who plan to return to work after leave* ***but*** *have* ***less*** *than 26 weeks service at the qualifying week:*

With regard to pay during this leave you will be eligible for the University’s contractual maternity pay scheme. You do not qualify to have statutory maternity payments made to you by the University but you may qualify for SMP to be paid to you by a previous employer or to be paid Maternity Allowance by Jobcentre Plus. Please note that you are expected to claim any statutory payments to which you are eligible.

Once you have confirmed which statutory payments you are entitled to, and at what rate and for what period, please let me have the details. During the first 26 weeks of your maternity leave the University will top up any statutory payments you receive to the equivalent of your normal rate of full pay. After the first 26 weeks you are entitled to take a further 26 weeks unpaid leave from the University (although, if eligible, statutory payments you are receiving from other sources may continue for such period as the statutory scheme determines).

OR (iii) *For those who are* ***not*** *intending to return after leave but have* ***more*** *than 26 weeks service at the qualifying week:*

As you are not intending to return to the University after your period of leave you do not qualify for the University’s contractual maternity pay scheme and you will be considered to have resigned from your employment from the day that your maternity leave begins. However, you are eligible for Statutory Maternity Pay to be paid to you by the University and this will be paid to you as a lump sum with your last salary payment

*Or (iv) For those who are* ***not*** *intending to return after leave but have less than 26 weeks service at the qualifying week:*

As you are not intending to return to the University after your period of leave you do not qualify for the University’s contractual maternity pay scheme and you will be considered to have resigned from your employment from the day that your maternity leave begins. As you do not meet the length of service eligibility criteria you are not eligible for Statutory Maternity Pay to be paid to you by the University. You should explore whether you are entitled to claim statutory maternity benefits from Jobcentre Plus or a previous employer.

*If the mother is intending to return after leave include the following*

Given your chosen start date of [insert date], your maternity leave will end on [insert date].

If you wish to change the date your leave starts you must, if at all possible, tell me at least 28 days before your proposed new start date.

If you decide to return to work before [insert date leave ends], you must give me at least 8 weeks’ notice.

If you wish to opt into the Shared Parental Leave scheme please note that both you and your partner will need to meet the relevant eligibility criteria and qualifying for the University’s contractual maternity scheme does not automatically mean you are eligible for the Shared Parental Leave scheme for which both parents must meet eligibility and notification criteria.

*In all cases include the following*

As your employer, I want to make sure that your health and safety as a pregnant mother are protected while you are working, and that you are not exposed to risk. I have already carried out an assessment to identify hazards in our workplace that could be a risk to any new, expectant, or breastfeeding mothers. Now you have told me you are pregnant, I will arrange for a specific risk assessment of your job and we will discuss what actions to take if any problems are identified. If you have any further concerns, following this assessment and specifically in relation to your pregnancy, please let me know immediately.

If you have any questions about any aspect of your maternity entitlement please do not hesitate to get in touch with me.

Yours sincerely,