AASTMT Maternity and Pregnancy Support Policy

1. Purpose and Policy Statement

The Arab Academy for Science, Technology and Maritime Transport (AASTMT) guarantees every employee and student paid maternity leave, protection from disadvantage, and practical support during pregnancy and after childbirth, so that women can continue to work and study on equal terms.

This policy gives effect to the AASTMT Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, which names pregnancy and maternity as protected grounds. It applies the provisions of the Egyptian Labor Law No. 14 of 2025 as a minimum. Where Egyptian law, an AASTMT regulation or an individual contract provides a more generous entitlement, the more generous provision applies.

2. Scope and Definitions

This policy applies to all AASTMT campuses, colleges, institutes and units in Egypt, and covers:

- all female employees, whether academic, administrative or technical, on permanent or fixed-term contracts, from their first day of service;
- all female students enrolled in undergraduate or postgraduate Programmes.

Definitions used in this policy:

- **Maternity leave**: leave taken by an employee before and after childbirth.
- **Expected date of childbirth**: the date stated in a medical certificate issued by a licensed physician.
- **Nursing break**: paid time during the working day for an employee to breastfeed or care for her child.
- **Childcare leave**: unpaid leave taken by an employee to care for a young child.
- **Student mother**: a student who is pregnant or who has given birth within the previous 24 months.

3. Maternity Leave and Pay for Employees

Every female employee is entitled to four months (120 days) of maternity leave on full pay, from her first day of service.

- The leave may be taken up to three times during the employee's service with AASTMT.
- At least 45 days of the leave must be taken after childbirth.
- The employee chooses when the leave starts before childbirth, in agreement with her line manager.
- Full pay includes basic salary and all regular allowances.
- Maternity leave counts as continuous service for annual leave, promotion, seniority and end-of-service benefits.
- If a child is stillborn, or dies shortly after birth, the employee keeps her full maternity leave entitlement for that birth.

4. Support During Pregnancy

A pregnant employee works reduced daily hours from the sixth month of pregnancy, as provided by Labor Law No. 14 of 2025, without loss of pay.

- She may take paid time off to attend antenatal medical appointments.
- She will not be assigned overtime, night work, or work that a physician certifies as a risk to her health or her pregnancy.
- Her line manager will carry out a workplace health and safety review and make reasonable adjustments, such as a change of duties, seating, schedule or location, or remote work where the role allows it.

5. Return to Work, Nursing Breaks and Childcare Leave

On return from maternity leave, an employee is entitled to two paid nursing breaks of at least 30 minutes each working day for 24 months after childbirth.

- Nursing breaks count as working time. The employee may combine them, or use them to start later or finish earlier, in agreement with her line manager.
- An employee with at least one year of service may take unpaid childcare leave of up to two years for each child, up to three times during her service.
- Her post is held open during childcare leave, and she returns on no less favorable terms.
- On request, an employee may return on a phased or flexible schedule for up to three months, where the needs of her unit allow it.
- Staff may use the nurseries listed by the Protocol and Public Relations Department at discounted rates.

6. Job Protection and Non-Discrimination

No employee or student will be dismissed, refused admission, demoted, denied promotion or otherwise disadvantaged because she is pregnant, on maternity leave, nursing or on childcare leave.

- An employee returns from maternity leave to the same post, or, where that is not reasonably practicable, to a suitable post on terms no less favorable.
- Pregnancy and maternity leave are not considered in performance appraisal, contract renewal or the allocation of duties.
- Any complaint of discrimination or harassment linked to pregnancy or maternity is handled under the Complaints procedure of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy. Those who complain are protected from victimization.

7. Support for Pregnant Students and Student Mothers

A pregnant student or student mother keeps her place and may continue her studies with the adjustments she needs.

- **Excused absence**: absence for pregnancy, childbirth or a child's illness, supported by a medical certificate, is excused and does not count towards attendance limits.
- **Assessments**: she may sit missed examinations or submit coursework at a later date, without penalty and without the grade being capped.
- **Leave of absence**: she may suspend her studies for up to two semesters and resume at the same stage of her programme. This period does not count towards the maximum study period.
- **Practical work**: laboratory, sea training and field work are adjusted or rescheduled where a physician certifies a risk to her health or her pregnancy.
- **Facilities**: she has access to a private room for nursing and rest on her campus.
- **Point of contact**: her academic advisor arranges these measures with the college dean and the Deanery of Education and Student Affairs. Requests are kept confidential.

8. Notice, Evidence and Procedure

An employee informs her line manager and the Human Resources Department in writing at least one month before she plans to start maternity leave, attaching a medical certificate showing the expected date of childbirth.

1. HR confirms the leave dates, pay and return date in writing within ten working days.
2. The employee sends HR the birth certificate within one month of childbirth.

3. Before her return, HR and the line manager agree any nursing break schedule, phased return or adjustment.
4. A request for childcare leave is made in writing at least one month before it starts and confirmed by HR within ten working days.

A student contacts her academic advisor as early as she can, with a medical certificate where relevant. Late notice never removes a protection under this policy.

9. Roles, Responsibilities and Related Policies

Role	Responsibility
Human Resources Department	Owns the employee provisions; confirms leave and pay; keeps records; reports annually on maternity leave taken and return-to-work rates
Deanery of Education and Student Affairs	Owns the student provisions; makes sure every campus has a nursing and rest room
Deans, heads of units and line managers	Apply the policy; agree adjustments and schedules; prevent any disadvantage
Academic advisors	Act as the first point of contact for students and arrange academic adjustments
Employees and students	Give notice and evidence as set out in section 8

Related policies: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy; Paternity Policy; labor Law No. 14 of 2025.

10. Document Control

Item	Detail
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Item	Detail
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