

# Pregnancy and Maternity- Related Discrimination and Disadvantage: Experiences of Mothers

This report was prepared by IFF Research on behalf of the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills and the Equality and Human Rights Commission.

## About IFF Research

IFF Research Ltd is an independent research agency specialising in research in the fields of learning and skills, employment and welfare, equality and diversity, enterprise and health and wellbeing. Established in 1965, IFF provides research for a range of clients across the public and private sectors.

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# Executive Summary

Pregnancy and maternity is a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010. The legislation prohibits discrimination because of pregnancy and maternity, including treating a woman less favourably because she is breastfeeding. Instances of unlawful discrimination could include a female employee being dismissed or made redundant; refused promotion; denied the right to return to the same job or having some of her responsibilities taken away because of her pregnancy or maternity leave. It could be sex discrimination if a woman was treated less favourably because she is breastfeeding or if she was harassed because she was pregnant, on maternity leave or because of her return from maternity leave.

In addition, Regulation 10 of the Maternity and Parental Leave Regulations 1999 requires that when a woman faces redundancy during her maternity leave, if there is a suitable alternative job it must be offered to her. Failure to do so could be automatic unfair dismissal and also discriminatory practice. There has also been a series of family-friendly legislation over the past decade which has had an impact on workplace management of pregnancy and maternity.

There is a lack of up-to-date evidence on the experiences of pregnant women at work; on maternity leave; and on return from maternity leave. As a result, the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) and the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) commissioned a programme of research to investigate the prevalence and nature of negative experiences and possible discrimination and disadvantage in the workplace among pregnant women at work and new mothers on their return to work. It also explores employer attitudes, approaches and challenges in managing pregnancy and maternity in the workplace.

The results in this report are based on survey interviews with 3,254 mothers and 60 follow-up in-depth interviews. The research covers the experiences of mothers working while pregnant, on maternity leave and returning to work as the mother of a young baby.

In all cases, results are based on mothers' perceptions and in some cases, their view of whether their treatment was because of their pregnancy and/or maternity leave. In some cases the survey asked whether mothers felt their treatment was due to their pregnancy and/or maternity leave. However, in other cases the survey captured whether or not a mother had experienced a particular situation (for example, dismissal) following their pregnancy but did not ask whether the mother believed it was because of their pregnancy. This treatment does not necessarily fall under the

legal definition of discrimination. Only an employment tribunal can determine whether unlawful discrimination or unfair dismissal has occurred.

As part of this project, a separate strand of research was also undertaken with employers across Great Britain involving 3,034 survey interviews with employers and 49 follow-up interviews. Results from this part of the research can be found in a separate report 'Pregnancy and Maternity-Related Discrimination and Disadvantage: Experiences of Employers'<sup>1</sup>.

## Prevalence of negative or possibly discriminatory experiences

Three in four mothers (77%) said they had a negative or possibly discriminatory experience during pregnancy; maternity leave; and on their return from maternity leave:

- Half of mothers (50%) described a negative impact on their opportunity, status or job security; if scaled up to the general population this could mean as many as 260,000 mothers per year (opportunity, status or job security refers to areas such as missing out on promotion or training opportunities, removal of duties and being treated with less respect, being threatened with dismissal or put under pressure to hand in their notice or leave). This included, requests for flexible working leading to negative consequences (24%); being given unsuitable work or workloads (15%); not being adequately informed about promotion opportunities while on maternity leave (9%); or feeling treated with less respect or that their opinion was less valued (8%).
- Two in five mothers (41%) felt there was a risk to, or impact on their health or welfare. This included, not being allowed to work flexibly or take breaks when they had asked to (15%); or being discouraged from attending antenatal appointments during work time (10%).
- One in five mothers (20%) reported financial loss as a result of their pregnancy; if scaled up to the general population this could mean as many as 100,000 mothers per year. The most common experience of financial loss was failing to gain a

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<sup>1</sup> Adams, L., Winterbotham, M. et. al (2016) *Pregnancy and Maternity-related Discrimination and Disadvantage: Experiences of Employers*, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills and Equalities and Human Rights Commission.

promotion they believed they were due (10%) or having a reduction in their salary or bonus (8%).

- One in five mothers (20%) said they experienced harassment or negative comments related to pregnancy or flexible working from their employer and/or colleagues; if scaled up to the general population this could mean as many as 100,000 mothers per year.
- One in nine mothers (11%) said they felt forced to leave their job; if scaled up to the general population this could mean as many as 54,000 mothers per year. This included those dismissed (1%); made compulsorily redundant, where others in their workplace were not (1%); or felt treated so poorly they felt they had to leave their job (9%).
- One in nine mothers (11%) said they had a negative experience related to flexible working; if scaled up to the general population this could mean as many as 56,000 mothers per year.
- One in 20 mothers (5%) said they had a negative experience related to breastfeeding; if scaled up to the general population this could mean as many as 24,000 mothers per year.
- Overall, 4% of mothers reported they left their job because risks were not resolved; if scaled up to the general population this could mean as many as 21,000 mothers per year.

Some mothers were more likely to report negative or possibly discriminatory experiences when other factors are controlled for. Length of service prior to maternity leave was an important factor in determining the likelihood of mothers reporting any negative or possible discriminatory experience. Mothers who had worked for their employer for more than five years were less likely than average to report any negative or possibly discriminatory experience. Those who had less than a year's service were more likely than average to have said they felt forced to leave their job or that they had experienced a risk to, or impact on, their health or welfare. However, mothers that had worked at their employer for between two and five years were more likely to have said they had experienced a negative or possibly discriminatory impact on opportunity, status or job security; financial loss; or harassment or negative comments.

Mothers' occupation was also important in determining experiences. Mothers who worked in Skilled trades occupations were more likely than average to have reported feeling forced to leave their job; financial loss; or a negative impact on opportunity, status or job security. Mothers who worked in Caring, leisure and other service occupations were more likely than average to have said they experienced a risk or impact on their health or welfare or some other type of negative experience. Mothers working in Administrative and secretarial and Elementary occupations were the least likely to report any negative or possibly discriminatory experience.

## Raising concerns and complaints

Three in four mothers (77%) reported a negative or possibly discriminatory experience and just over a quarter (28%) of these raised issues either formally or informally (22% of all mothers).

Many mothers experienced barriers to raising complaints and concerns with employers. Survey results show that around one in four mothers (27%) who considered but chose not to go through their employer's internal grievance procedure said the prospect was too daunting. Other main reasons for deciding not to go through an internal grievance procedure included that the issue had been resolved (24%).

In the follow up interviews mothers reported a number of barriers to raising complaints including: fear of creating bad feeling with their colleagues or employer; fear of adverse consequences; stress and tiredness; belief that nothing would change; lack of information about rights; lack of clear complaints procedures; a sense of guilt; and the financial cost of pursuing a complaint. Some mothers identified a number of these barriers.

One in 12 (8%) mothers sought advice from external organisations such as Acas or the Citizens Advice Bureau; often where mothers told their employer about this, it triggered positive action from employers.

The employer survey suggests that complaints or discussions about unfair treatment are rare. One in 20 (5%) of employers with experience in the last three years of a pregnant employee at their workplace or a mother returning to work following maternity leave had received either: a formal complaint relating to pregnancy or maternity discrimination (1%) and/or had informal discussions with women about perceived unfair treatment (4%).

## Employer and line manager support

Despite 77% of mothers reporting a negative or possibly discriminatory experience, most mothers said they felt supported by their employer, two thirds of mothers (66%) reported that their employer willingly supported their needs as both a pregnant woman and as a mother of a young baby. Four in five mothers said employers willingly supported their needs while they were pregnant and three in four of those who returned to work (74%) said employers willingly supported their needs as a new mother. Furthermore, the majority of women reported positive experiences after telling their employer they were pregnant: 89% of mothers felt equally valued as an employee after telling their employer they were pregnant.

The employer survey found that the majority of employers (84%) felt it was in their interests to support pregnant women and those on maternity leave. The main reason for this was improving staff retention.

Treatment by a line manager was generally felt to have a greater impact on the experiences of mothers (whether positive or negative) than the role played by HR.

The follow-up interviews found that the most positive experiences were described by mothers who felt they had both supportive line managers and a supportive Human Resources (HR) department. Mothers' perceptions of support were highly subjective; and their expectations of support were often quite low. Some mothers considered their needs had been supported if they received their statutory entitlements (for example, being allowed to attend antenatal appointments during work time; receiving the correct maternity pay; and having a job to return to – even where a mother had to negotiate for these). Although on paper many supportive employers were simply fulfilling their statutory obligations (for example allowing mothers to attend appointments and covering maternity pay), mothers were especially positive about their experience of feeling supported if the attitude of managers and general culture of the workplace was supportive and positive about pregnancy and work-life balance.

## Identification and management of risks

Three in five mothers (62%) reported that their employer initiated a discussion about potential risks arising from their pregnancy. Where the employer initiated a discussion about potential risks, four in five mothers (79%) said their employer made them aware of actual risks to them or their baby (half of mothers (49%) overall).

Most mothers who had been made aware of risks by their employer felt all risks were tackled (77%), but one in five (19%) felt that some but not all were dealt with and a small proportion (2%) felt none were dealt with.

One in five mothers (19%) said they identified risks their employer did not. The majority of mothers who identified risks themselves raised these with their employer (86%) and most mothers (75%) felt that all or some of these risks raised had been addressed. One in five mothers (18%) said their employer had not tackled risks identified (by themselves or their employer).

The follow-up interviews showed that in some instances, mothers sometimes felt that their employer had a 'tick-box' approach to assessment and management of risk during pregnancy to comply with company procedures; that employers had not dealt properly with risks; and that those conducting the risk assessments were not really interested in their welfare.

In other cases, mothers felt that their employers conducted thorough risk assessments when they were pregnant, and identified and tackled risks. However, mothers said that sometimes their employer failed to explain the need to make adjustments to their colleagues. As a result, they felt their colleagues formed negative views about their commitment to work.

## Communication while on maternity leave

The majority of mothers felt they had or were having the right amount of contact with their employers while on maternity leave. However a quarter of mothers (26%) were more likely to report too little contact with their employer while on maternity leave rather than too much (4%). Under two thirds of mothers (62%) who reported too little contact said that they would have liked to receive general updates about what was

happening at work. A minority of mothers (6%) reported experiencing disagreement with their employer about when they had to notify them about their intention to return to work. In some instances, the in-depth interviews found that too little communication left mothers feeling isolated or undervalued. Mothers who wanted contact from their employer during maternity leave preferred both informal and formal communication with the mode used often depending on the reason for the contact. Generally, mothers wanted communication to increase in the lead up to their return to work to help prepare for their return to work.

The employer study found that a quarter of employers (26%) said the uncertainty around whether those on maternity leave would return to work was difficult for them to manage. In some cases, the difficulties employers experienced in managing maternity leave was compounded by their uncertainty about how often to contact women on maternity leave.

## Returning to work

Most mothers returned to the same employer following maternity leave. This was generally to the same job title and description they held before maternity leave (83% of returners). However, despite returning to the same job, 6% described other changes to their role that were against their wishes. Sometimes mothers felt they had a reduction in responsibilities and/or felt less valued. A further 4% returned to a different job that was not the role they wanted to do.

One in 10 mothers (9%) said they felt treated worse by their employer on their return to work than they were before pregnancy.

## Loss of employment while pregnant or on maternity leave

Around one in 20 mothers (6%) were made redundant at some point during pregnancy, maternity leave or on return from maternity leave.

This includes 1% of mothers who were made redundant in circumstances where they did not take voluntary redundancy; were not offered an alternative position at the same or a higher level; and did not report colleagues being made redundant at the same time. In the employers' report, 1% of employers with any recent pregnant employees had dismissed a woman who was pregnant or on maternity leave.

## Requesting flexible working arrangements

Just over two thirds of mothers (68%) made a request for at least one flexible working practice. For most types of flexible working at least three in four mothers had their requests approved. Where requests were approved, more often than not they were approved straightaway.

Around two in five mothers (38%) did not request a type of flexible working they wanted. This was typically because they did not think it would be approved (reported by 64% of respondents that did not submit a request) or because they were worried their employer would view the request negatively (50%).



Findings from the employer study show that three in five employers (58%) who had managed a pregnant worker in the last three years had received requests for flexible working, of which most of these were granted (84%). Of the 14% of employers that had turned down at least one request, the main reason given was that it did not fit with operational requirements (43%).

The follow-up interviews illustrated that mothers were left unsure about the availability or likely approval of requests to work flexibly when their employers did not actively promote flexible working.

Around half of mothers (51%) who had their flexible working request approved said they felt it resulted in negative consequences.

## Breastfeeding

One in five mothers (19%) said returning to work influenced their decision to stop breastfeeding either before or after returning to work from maternity leave. Three quarters of mothers (74%) who felt work had an impact on their decision to stop breastfeeding said they experienced practical difficulties combining breastfeeding and work, or assumed they would.

One in five mothers (22%) who were still breastfeeding or had recently stopped around the time of returning from maternity leave spoke to their employer or line manager about the possibility of breastfeeding or expressing milk at work. Where conversations had taken place, they tended to result in a positive or neutral outcome.

One in 10 mothers who were breastfeeding around the time of their return from maternity leave reported feeling uncomfortable or unsure about discussing with their employer the possibility of breastfeeding or expressing milk at work. However where these discussions took place they were more likely to be positive than negative.

The employer survey found that over half of employers (53%) reported providing facilities for mothers to express milk. Relatively few employers had received any requests relating to breastfeeding or expressing milk in the past three years (8%).

One in five mothers (21%) who continued breastfeeding once they had returned to work from maternity leave did not feel their needs as a breastfeeding mother were supported willingly by their employer. Generally, this related to mothers feeling employers were reluctant to, or failed to, provide necessary facilities or breaks.

## Recruitment and looking for work

The majority of mothers surveyed reported that they were currently in work (77%). Among respondents who were not in work, one in 12 mothers (8%) said that they were not looking for work. The main reasons reported by mothers that were not in work nor were they looking for work were that they wanted to look after their children themselves (75%), they could not find a job that pays enough to pay for childcare (52%), they could not find suitable childcare (45%), mothers could not find a job with the right hours (36%) or they could not find a job in a suitable location (24%).

Some mothers who didn't look for work while pregnant reported in the follow-up interviews that the main reasons for this were because they felt employers would be unwilling to employ pregnant women; it would be unfair to expect employers to do so; and they were worried about the impact on maternity pay or benefits.

A small proportion of mothers (3%) had attended job interviews while pregnant and most of these had informed their employer they were pregnant or felt it was obvious. Around half (51%) of those who attended an interview when pregnant were successful, as were three quarters who attended an interview after the birth of their baby.

Over a third of mothers (35%) who attended interviews while pregnant mentioned their pregnancy during the interview. One in 12 mothers (8%) attending job interviews while pregnant said they experienced being asked by an employer if they were pregnant. Three quarters of mothers (77%) that were unsuccessful in their job interviews while pregnant (where the employer knew about their pregnancy) felt it had affected their chances of success.

In comparison, the employers' survey found that the majority of employers (70%) believed that women should declare to potential employers during recruitment if they are pregnant and one in four employers (24%) believed that women should work for them for at least a year before deciding to have children.

One in five mothers (21%) attended an interview after the birth of their child. Around a quarter of mothers (23%) reported being asked by an employer whether they had a young child. Three quarters of mothers who attended interviews after the birth of their baby had been successful at some or all of these interviews. Among those unsuccessful where the employer had known they had a young child, around half (47%) felt having a young child had affected their chances of getting the job.

Some mothers felt it best not to mention having young children at interview because they were concerned about how this might impact their chances of success.

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Background

Pregnancy and maternity is a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010. The legislation prohibits discrimination because of pregnancy and maternity, including treating a woman less favourably because she is breastfeeding. Instances of unlawful discrimination could include a female employee being dismissed or made redundant; refused promotion; denied the right to return to the same job or having some of her responsibilities taken away because of her pregnancy or maternity leave. It could be sex discrimination if a woman is treated less favourably because she is breastfeeding or if she is harassed because she was pregnant, on maternity leave or because of her return from maternity leave.

In addition, Regulation 10 of the Maternity and Parental Leave Regulations 1999 requires that when a woman faces redundancy during her maternity leave, if there is a suitable alternative job it must be offered to her. Failure to do so could be automatic unfair dismissal and also discriminatory practice.

There have been significant changes in the regulation of family-friendly working arrangements over the last decade, which also have had an impact on workplace management of pregnancy and maternity. These include the Work and Families Act 2006 which introduced 52 weeks maternity leave for all employees and Keeping in Touch Days; changes to the rules governing carers' requests for flexible working (2007); the Additional Paternity Leave Regulations 2010 and the Children and Families Act 2014, which extended the right to request flexible working to all employees. Despite the legislation, there is some evidence that women still experience discrimination because of pregnancy or maternity; that some employers may not fully understand their obligations towards pregnant women, those on maternity leave, or those returning from maternity leave; and that employees may not be fully aware of their rights or able to secure access to redress.

The last comprehensive study on these issues was undertaken in 2005, when the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) conducted a formal investigation into discrimination against new and expectant mothers in the workplace.<sup>2</sup> This looked at

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<sup>2</sup> EOC (2005) 'Greater expectations – final report of the EOC's investigation into discrimination against new and expectant mothers in the workplace'. Available at:<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/uploads/eocpregnancydiscrimgreaterexpectations.pdf> [accessed on: 9 December 2015]

‘any potential disadvantage at work caused wholly or partly by pregnancy, or by taking maternity leave’.

The investigation generated an estimate that, per year, almost half (45%) of the 440,000 pregnant women in Great Britain experienced some form of disadvantage at work, simply for being pregnant or taking maternity leave. It is also estimated that 30,000 (7%) lost their jobs. This figure includes voluntary redundancy; those who were offered an alternative position; and those made redundant as part of a wider round of redundancies at the mother’s workplace. The investigation established that the principal reasons for employers not complying with the law on pregnancy and maternity included their lack of knowledge or understanding of maternity rights, the costs of and difficulties planning work when managing employees who were pregnant or on maternity leave and negative attitudes (albeit among a minority).

More recent surveys suggested that mothers and those who are pregnant still experience some unfair treatment, but did not explore the scale, causes, and whom it affects<sup>3</sup>. Other surveys looked at employers’ awareness of maternity rights, but did not indicate where awareness is low and why.<sup>4</sup>

In light of these evidence gaps, Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) and the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) commissioned IFF Research to research employer and employee experiences in relation to the management of pregnancy and maternity in the workplace. The research provides a robust evidence base on the current scale and nature of possibly discriminatory practice experienced by pregnant women and new mothers and on employer attitudes and approaches to pregnancy and maternity, and the challenges they face managing these.

## 1.2 Research objectives

The primary aims and objectives of the research are to explore:

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<sup>3</sup> BIS, DWP, NatCen (2011) ‘Maternity and Paternity Rights Survey and Women Returners Survey 2009/10’. Available at: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/214367/rrep777.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/214367/rrep777.pdf) [accessed on: 9 December 2015]

<sup>4</sup> BIS (2007) ‘Third Work-life Balance Surveys of Employers’. BIS (2015) ‘Fourth Work-life Balance Survey of Employers’.

- type, incidence and experience of possible pregnancy and maternity-related discrimination and disadvantage in Great Britain;
- characteristics of women who experience possible discrimination;
- availability and effectiveness of advice and support;
- experiences of women who raise complaints or attempt to enforce their legal rights;
- employer awareness and attitudes to their legal rights and responsibilities;
- employer attitudes towards recruiting and managing women of childbearing age, pregnant women, those on maternity leave and women with children;
- availability of advice and support for employers (particularly small and medium-sized enterprises);
- why some employers may possibly discriminate and others are successful in promoting good practice;
- the demand among mothers to breastfeed or express milk in the workplace; and
- employer attitudes, policies and practices in relation to breastfeeding in the workplace.

The results in this report are based on survey interviews with 3,254 mothers and follow-up in-depth interviews with 60 mothers.

Only statistically significant survey results, including findings in relation to protected characteristics, have been reported, unless otherwise stated. The following symbol has been used in the report \* to indicate a percentage based on fewer than 50 responses. Results should therefore be treated as indicative. The technical appendix details the methodology used for both the survey and follow-up interviews and explains reporting conventions and interpretation.

## 2. Reporting of negative or possibly discriminatory experiences

This chapter explores the extent to which mothers report a negative or possibly discriminatory experience in the workplace during pregnancy; maternity leave; or on their return after maternity leave.

A number of statutory legal rights apply to pregnant employees, employees on maternity leave and those returning to work following maternity leave. These include rights to reasonable paid time off to attend antenatal care appointments; 52 weeks' maternity leave if they are officially employed at their workplace and have given the correct notice period; statutory maternity pay; protection from redundancy during maternity leave; a right to request flexible working; and protection from unlawful discrimination.

### 2.1 Summary

Three in four mothers (77%) said they had at least one negative or possibly discriminatory experience (as defined by mothers, see below) during pregnancy; maternity leave; or on their return from maternity leave.

Half of mothers (50%) described a negative impact on their opportunity, status or job security; if scaled up to the general population this could mean as many as 260,000 mothers per year. Two in five mothers (41%) felt there was a risk to or impact on their health or welfare; if scaled up to the general population this could mean as many as 210,000 mothers per year.

One in five mothers (20%) reported financial loss as a result of their pregnancy; if scaled up to the general population this could mean as many as 100,000 mothers per year. A similar share of mothers (20%) said they experienced harassment or negative comments related to pregnancy.

One in nine mothers (11%) felt forced to leave their job; if scaled up to the general population this could mean as many as 54,000 mothers per year.

One in nine mothers (11%) said they had a negative experience related to flexible working; if scaled up to the general population this could mean as many as 56,000 mothers per year. 5% of mothers said they had a negative experience related to

breastfeeding; if scaled up to the general population this could mean as many as 24,000 mothers per year.

Some mothers were more likely to report negative or possibly discriminatory experiences.<sup>5</sup> Length of service prior to maternity leave was an important factor in determining the likelihood of mothers reporting negative or possible discriminatory experiences. Mothers who had worked for their employer for more than five years were less likely than average to report any negative or possibly discriminatory experience. Those who had less than a year's service were more likely than average to say they felt forced to leave their job or that they had experienced a risk to, or impact on, their health or welfare. However, those that had worked at their employer for between two and five years were more likely to say they had experienced a negative or possibly discriminatory impact on opportunity, status or job security; financial loss; or harassment or negative comments.

Occupation is also important in determining experiences of mothers. Mothers who worked in Skilled trades occupations (for example, chefs, gardeners, car mechanics, clothing manufacturers or carpet fitters), were more likely than average to report feeling forced to leave their job; financial loss; or a negative impact on opportunity, status or job security. Mothers who worked in Caring, leisure and other service occupations (for example, childminder, veterinary nurses, care workers, hairdressers or travel agents) were more likely than average to say they experienced a risk to, or impact on, their health or welfare; or some other type of negative experience. Those working in Administrative and secretarial occupations (for example, an office manager, a legal secretary, government revenue officer or a personal assistant) and Elementary occupations (for example, factory packers, cleaners, farm labourers or plant nursery workers) were least likely to report any negative or possibly discriminatory experience.

Mothers working full-time were more likely than those working part-time to report a negative or possibly discriminatory experience.

## 2.2 Statutory rights during pregnancy

All pregnant employees have the right to reasonable paid time off to attend antenatal care appointments. Antenatal care covers not only medical examinations related to the pregnancy but also, for example, parent craft classes, if they have been recommended by a doctor or midwife.

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<sup>5</sup> After controlling for other factors. For a full description of the multivariate analysis technique used and detailed data tables please see the Technical Appendix or the Technical Report.

## 2.3 Statutory rights while on maternity leave

### Statutory leave

All employees can take up to 52 weeks' maternity leave if they are officially employed at their workplace and have given the correct notice period (15 weeks before an employee's due date). This is applicable regardless of how long an employee has been with their employer, how many hours they work or how much they get paid.

The first 26 weeks of statutory leave is known as 'Ordinary Maternity Leave', the last 26 weeks as 'Additional Maternity Leave'. Not all 26 weeks have to be taken by an employee. However, employees must take compulsory maternity leave, which is two weeks immediately after the birth (or four weeks for factory workers).

### Statutory pay

All employees are eligible for Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) if they:

- earn on average at least £111 per week;
- give the correct notice;
- are able to prove they are pregnant; and
- have worked for their employer continuously for at least 26 weeks up to the 'qualifying week' – the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth.

SMP is paid for up to 39 weeks. Employees are entitled to:

- 90% of their average weekly earnings (before tax) for the first six weeks; and
- £139.58 (2015/16 rate) or 90% of their average weekly earnings (whichever is lower) for the next 33 weeks.

SMP usually begins when an employee starts their maternity leave. It starts automatically if an employee is off work for a pregnancy-related illness in the four weeks before the week her baby is due unless her employer agrees that she can carry on working.



## Enhanced protection from redundancy when on Ordinary Maternity Leave

A female employee can be made redundant while on maternity leave if her position is genuinely redundant, but cannot be selected for automatic redundancy just because she is pregnant or on maternity leave. If an employee's role is made redundant during maternity leave, her employer must offer her any suitable alternative vacancies. The employee on maternity leave must be considered for these vacancies before any other employee and must not be made to apply for any such vacancy or be interviewed for it – it should simply be offered to her. If an employee is made redundant, and qualifies for SMP, she must continue to receive it.

### 2.4 Statutory rights when returning to work following maternity leave

#### Right to request flexible working

Flexible working describes a type of working arrangement which gives some degree of flexibility on how long, where, when and at what times employees work. The flexibility can be in terms of working time (for example, part-time, flexitime), working location (such as working from home) or the pattern of working (for example, job share). Since April 2003 parents of young and disabled children have had the statutory right to apply to work flexibly. The Children and Families Act 2014 extended this statutory right to all employees. To request flexible working, an employee must make an application in writing, setting out their proposal. Employers must consider the request and notify the employee of their decisions within 14 days of the date of a meeting to discuss the request. The notification must set out clear business reasons for any decision taken.

#### Accrual of annual leave during maternity

While on maternity leave, employees continue to build up their holiday entitlements just as they would if they were absent due to illness. If they cannot take all the leave they are entitled to during a particular year, they can carry it over to the following year.

### 2.5 Protection from unlawful discrimination

Pregnancy and maternity discrimination is unlawful under the Equality Act 2010. Any unfavourable treatment because of pregnancy, pregnancy related sickness or maternity leave is unlawful. Unfavourable treatment because of pregnancy or maternity leave includes:

- Dismissal including redundancy
- Refusing to recruit a woman because she is pregnant or on maternity leave
- Being overlooked for a promotion

- Removal of responsibilities
- Failure to carry out an appraisal
- Failure to make adjustments where necessary to protect pregnant employees or their babies
- Lack of consultation about redundancies, reorganisation or new jobs, and
- Denial of a bonus because of pregnancy or maternity leave.
- It could also be sex discrimination to harass a woman, for example by making unwanted comments about pregnancy which create a hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for a pregnant employee.

## 2.6 Defining negative or possibly discriminatory experiences

This report defines these experiences based on mothers' responses to a combination of survey questions. Table 2.1 outlines the types of experiences defined as 'negative' and how these feed into eight broader 'categories' of negative experience.

These definitions are derived from survey findings based on mothers' perceptions and, sometimes, their view of whether their treatment was because of their pregnancy and/or maternity leave. In some cases the survey asked whether mothers felt that treatment had happened because of their pregnancy and/or maternity leave. However, in other cases the survey captured whether or not a mother had experienced a particular situation (for example, dismissal) following their pregnancy but did not ask whether the mother believed it was because of their pregnancy. The survey questionnaire can be found in the Technical appendix. This treatment does not necessarily fall under the legal definition of discrimination. Only an employment tribunal can determine whether unlawful discrimination or unfair dismissal has occurred.

**Table 2. 1: Definition of negative or possibly discriminatory experience categories**

Category of negative experience	Type of negative or possibly discriminatory experience
Felt forced to leave job	Women who following their pregnancy:
	Were made redundant
	Were dismissed
	Felt treated so badly that they felt they had to leave
Financial loss	Women who following their pregnancy:
	Failed to gain promotion

Category of negative experience	Type of negative or possibly discriminatory experience
	Had a reduction in their salary or bonus
	Received a lower pay rise or bonus less than their peers
	Did not receive benefits (such as a company car or mobile phone) or had them taken away
	Were suspended without pay following risk assessment
	Were demoted
Negative impact on opportunity, status or job security	Women who following their pregnancy:
	Were threatened with dismissal

Category of negative experience	Type of negative or possibly discriminatory experience
	Were encouraged/pressured to take voluntary redundancy
	Were not adequately informed about redundancies that might impact on them
	Were not adequately informed about promotion opportunities
	Were put under pressure to hand in their notice
	Were offered a job at a workplace too far away to travel so had to leave
	Were given unsuitable work or workloads
	Were denied access to training they would otherwise have received

Category of negative experience	Type of negative or possibly discriminatory experience
	Returned to a different job after maternity leave not of their choice
	Were given duties at a lower level or job was different in some other way against their wishes
	Faced disagreement about when had to notify employer about whether intended to return to work
	Faced disagreement about what job they should do on return from maternity leave
	Felt their chances of success at interview were affected
	Felt they were treated with less respect or that their opinion was less valued
	Felt approved flexible working requests led to negative consequences

Category of negative experience	Type of negative or possibly discriminatory experience
Risk or impact on health and welfare	Women who following their pregnancy:
	Were discouraged from attending antenatal classes during work time
	Experienced pressure to return to work sooner than they wanted to
	Experienced pressure to work while on maternity leave
	Had a risk assessment conducted but some or all of the risks identified were not tackled
	Identified risks themselves but some or all were not tackled
	Felt their physical health or stress levels were negatively impacted

Category of negative experience	Type of negative or possibly discriminatory experience
	Were not allowed to work more flexibly, start later/finish earlier or take more breaks
	Were not allowed time off for illness or other problems with baby
Harassment/negative comments	Women who following their pregnancy:
	Received unpleasant/offensive comments from employer or colleagues, or otherwise treated in a way that humiliated or intimidated them
	Were treated poorly following complaint about offensive comments from employer/colleagues
Negative experience related to breastfeeding	Women who following their pregnancy:
	Had requests to breastfeed or express milk declined; or mothers felt this was not possible



Category of negative experience	Type of negative or possibly discriminatory experience
	because of need for breaks; or it being impractical for job
	Felt needs as a breastfeeding mother were supported somewhat reluctantly, very reluctantly or not at all
	Experienced difficulties breastfeeding at work
	Felt issues with breastfeeding at work influenced decision to leave work
Negative experience related flexible working requests	Women who following their pregnancy:
	Had flexible working requests declined on return to work and an alternative solution was not reached
	Was not allowed to reduce number of hours when asked

Category of negative experience	Type of negative or possibly discriminatory experience
Other negative experience	Women who following their pregnancy:
	Had their shift hours or patterns changed against their will
	Felt they were unfairly criticised
	Were signed off sick or encouraged to take time off before ready to start maternity leave
	Were encouraged to start maternity leave before they felt ready to
	Did not feel equally valued as an employee
	Were not supported by employer while working during pregnancy

Category of negative experience	Type of negative or possibly discriminatory experience
	Had their shift pattern or hours changed against wishes
	Faced disagreement about holiday accumulation or benefits entitled to
	Felt there was too much contact during maternity leave regarding wanting them to return to work, for work to be done during maternity or wanting them not return to work
	Had no response from employer to queries during maternity leave
	Faced disagreement about their return to work (and whether they were entitled to return)
	Felt employer unhappy to grant maternity leave
	Felt they were treated less favourably/worse than before pregnancy in some other way

Category of negative experience	Type of negative or possibly discriminatory experience
	Felt that employer did not support needs or supported them reluctantly
	Experienced stress or worry about colleagues talking negatively behind their back
	Felt poor treatment has led to them considering leaving employer
	Felt treatment by employer during either pregnancy and/or maternity leave heavily or slightly influenced their decision not to return to work
	Felt there was too much contact from employer during maternity leave
	Felt there was too little contact from employer during maternity leave
	Felt treated unfairly by line manager

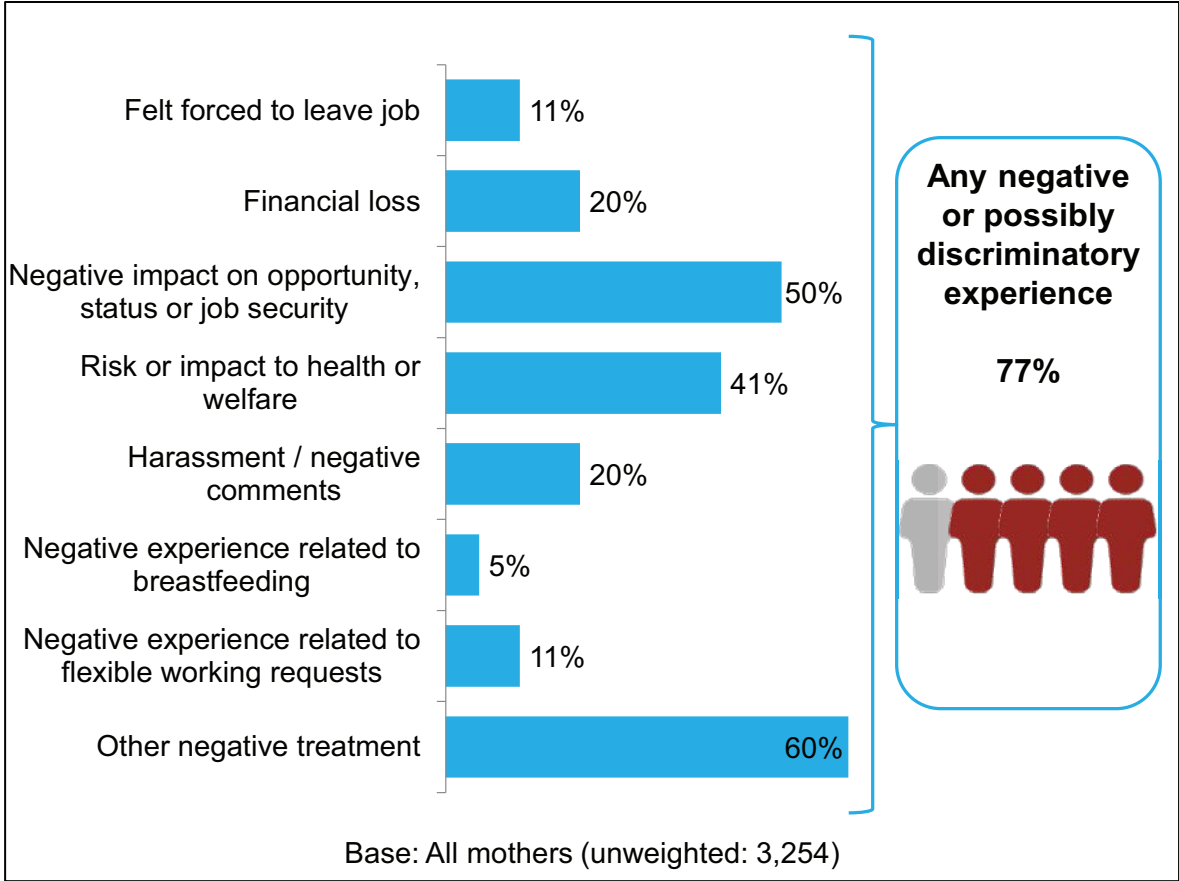
Category of negative experience	Type of negative or possibly discriminatory experience
	Felt treated unfairly by line employer

## 2.7 Proportion of mothers reporting a negative or possibly discriminatory experience

Over three in four mothers (77%) reported at least one work-related negative or possibly discriminatory experience, as detailed in Figure 2.1.

- Half of mothers reported a negative impact on their career, such as: being given duties at a lower level or being treated with less respect or feeling that their opinion was less valued as a result of their pregnancy; if scaled up to the general population this could mean as many as 260,000 mothers per year.
- Two in five mothers (41%) felt there was a risk to or impact on their health or welfare; if scaled up to the general population this could mean as many as 210,000 mothers per year.
- One in five (20%) mothers said they had experienced harassment or negative comments related to pregnancy or flexible working from their employer and/or colleagues; if scaled up to the general population this could mean as many as 100,000 mothers per year.
- One in nine mothers (11%) said they felt forced to leave their job and were either: dismissed; made compulsorily redundant, where others in their workplace were not; or felt treated so poorly they felt they had to leave their job; if scaled up to the general population this could mean as many as 54,000 mothers per year.
- One in nine mothers (11%) reported a negative experience related to flexible working; if scaled up to the general population this could mean as many as 56,000 mothers per year.
- One in five mothers reported financial loss as a result of their pregnancy; if scaled up to the general population this could mean as many as 100,000 mothers per year.
- One in 20 mothers reported a negative experience related to breastfeeding, such as feeling their needs as a breastfeeding mother were not supported; if scaled up to the general population this could mean as many as 24,000 mothers per year.

**Figure 2.1: Overall incidence of negative or possibly discriminatory experience by category**



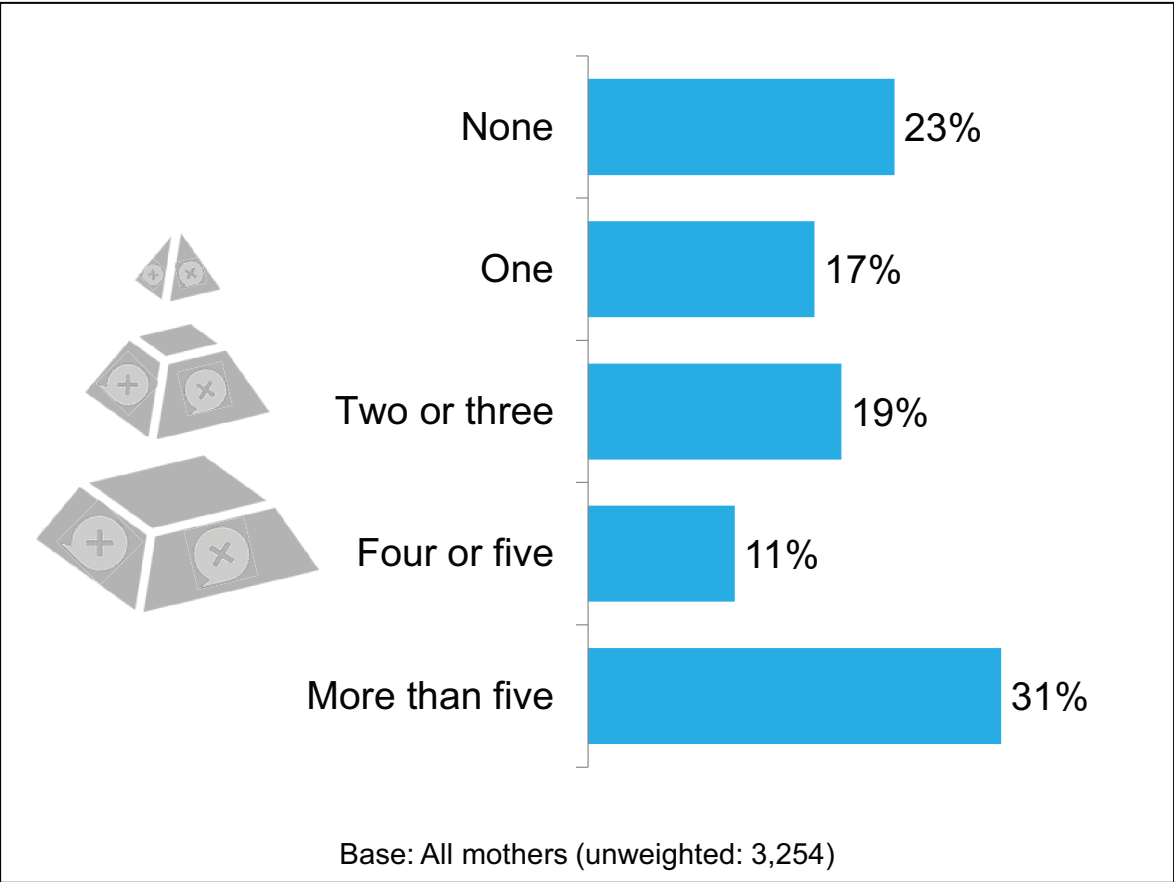
**2.8 Extent of negative or possibly discriminatory experience**

Three in five mothers (61%) reported having two or more types of negative experiences and a third experienced more than five different types (Figure 2.2). The median average was three negative experiences per mother. The number of experiences is not an indicator of increasing severity for an individual as each negative experience may have different degrees of severity.

Feeling forced to leave their job or experiencing harassment or negative comments were most commonly reported alongside a high number of other types of negative experiences.

- Three quarters of mothers (74%) that felt forced to leave their job reported more than 10 different types of negative experiences.
- More than half of mothers (54%) reporting harassment or negative comments reported more than 10 types of negative experiences in total.

**Figure 2.2: Number of types of negative or possibly discriminatory experiences**



### 2.9 Prevalence of negative or possibly discriminatory experiences at each stage

Figure 2.3 shows the percentage of mothers who reported at least one negative or possibly discriminatory experience at each stage of pregnancy, maternity and return to work, and for negative or possibly discriminatory experiences that were not stage specific (some questions asked in the surveys did not specify a particular stage).

Mothers reported negative or possibly discriminatory experiences throughout different stages of: pregnancy; maternity leave; and on their return from maternity leave.

Six in 10 mothers (58%) said they had a negative or possibly discriminatory experience during pregnancy (Figure 2.3). Four in 10 mothers (43%) reported at least one negative or possibly discriminatory experience while on maternity leave and four in 10 mothers (42%) that did return to work after maternity leave reported at least one negative or possibly discriminatory experience after their return (36% of all mothers regardless of whether they returned to work or not). Just under half of mothers (45%) reported at least one negative or possibly discriminatory experience at some point



over the course of their pregnancy and/or return after maternity leave that was not stage specific.

In contrast, the employers' survey found that almost nine in 10 (89%) employers said it was easy to protect employees from being treated unfavourably because they are pregnant or on maternity leave.

**Figure 2. 3 Prevalence of negative or possibly discriminatory experience**

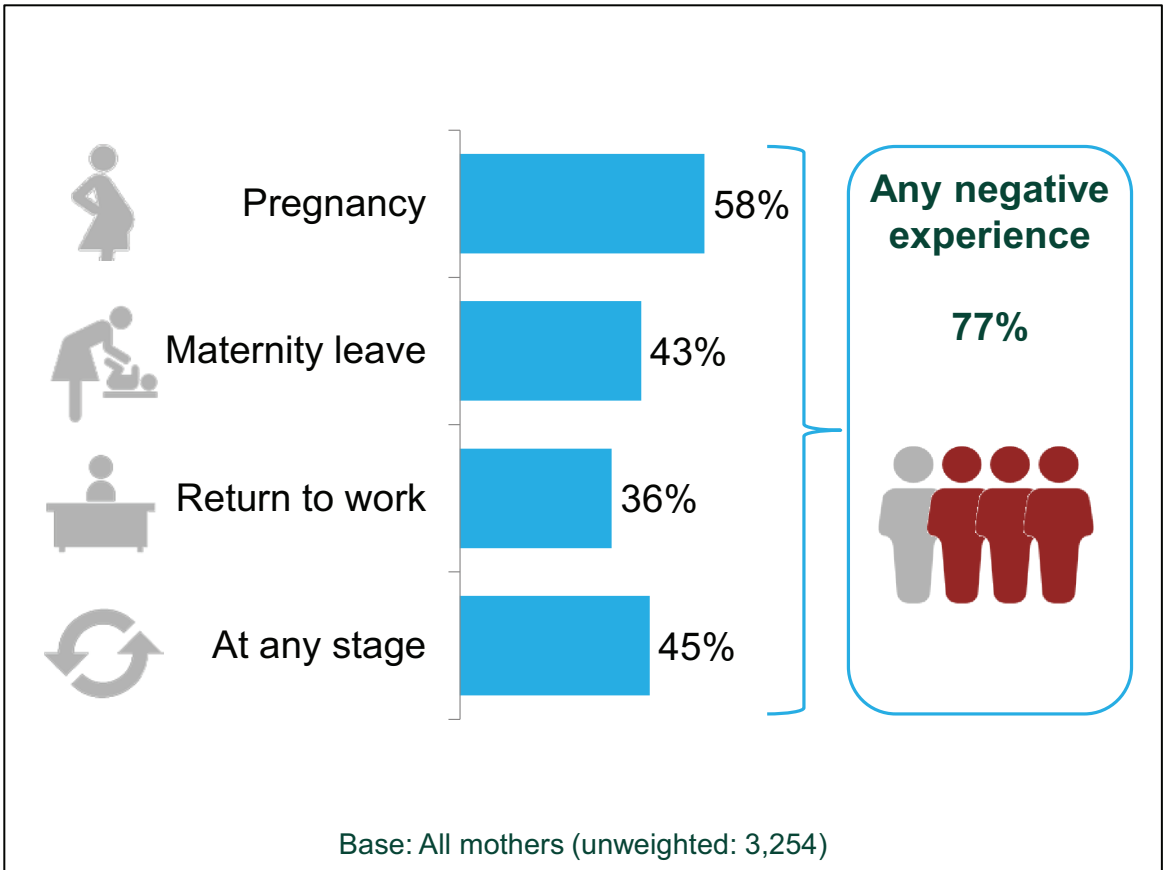
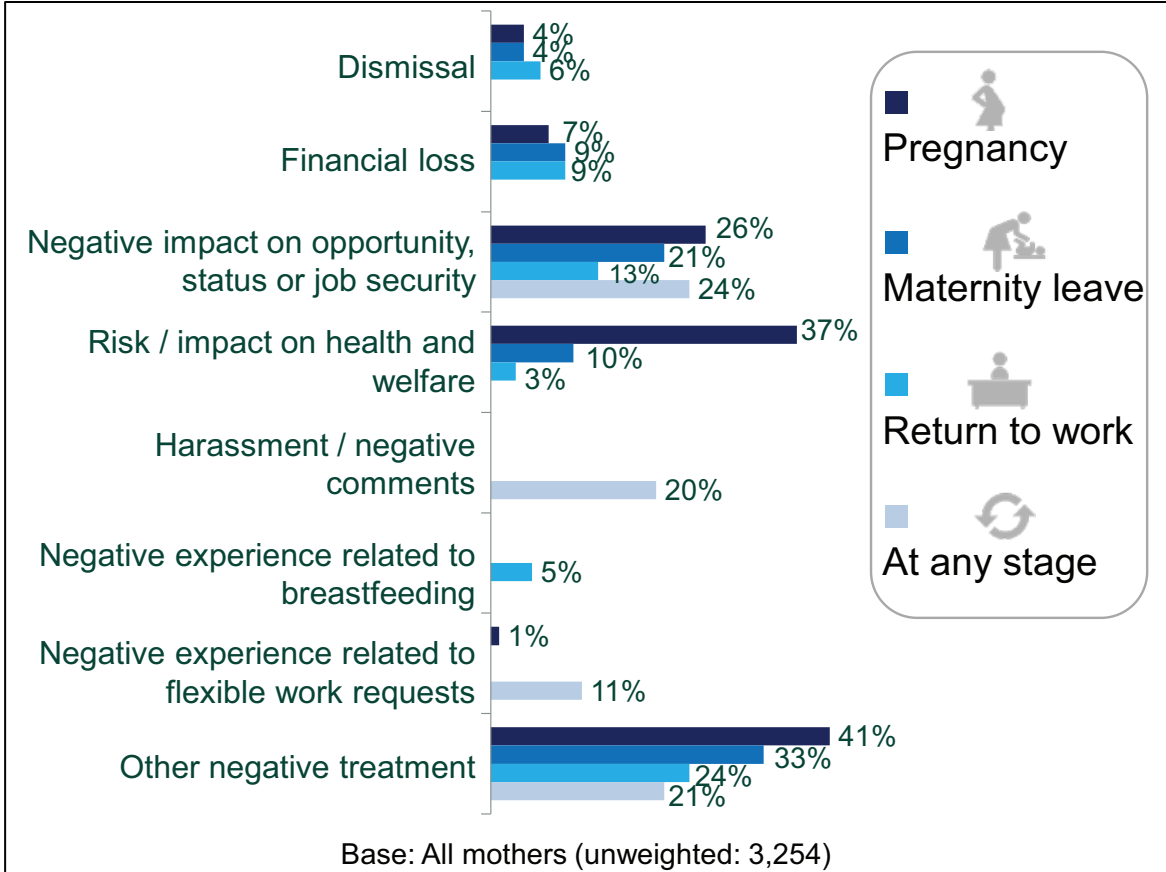


Figure 2.4 shows how prevalent each category of negative or possibly discriminatory experience was at each stage of pregnancy, maternity and return after maternity leave.

Mothers were most likely to experience a risk or impact on their health and welfare during pregnancy (37%). Mothers were more likely to report feeling forced to leave their job once they had returned to work (6%) compared to during pregnancy (4%) or maternity leave (4%).

**Figure 2. 4 Prevalence of types of negative or possibly discriminatory experience by stage**



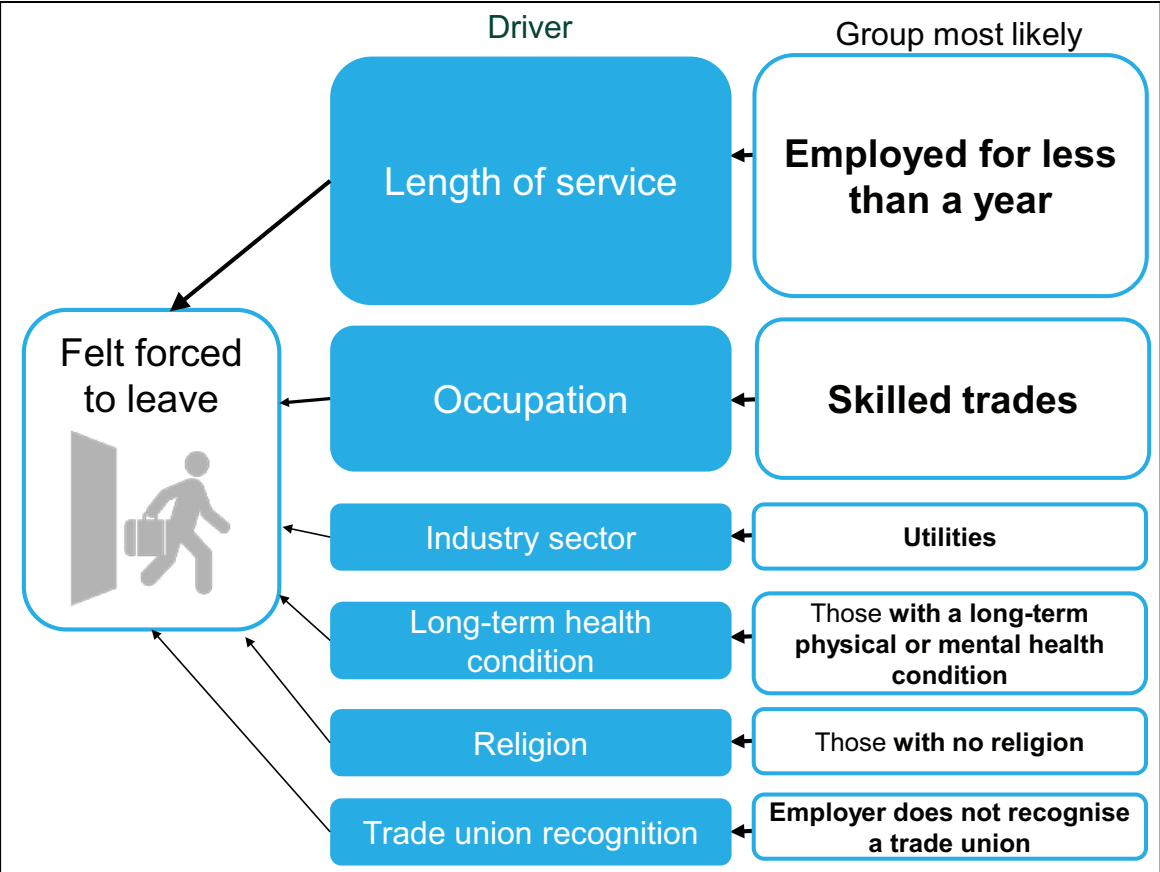
**2.10 Mothers most likely to report negative or possibly discriminatory experiences**

A multivariate analysis identified which mothers (in terms of demographic or employment characteristics) were most likely to report each of the eight categories of negative or possibly discriminatory experience. The remainder of the results in this chapter outline findings from the multivariate analysis. A description of the technique and data tables can be found in the Technical appendix.

**Mothers most likely to feel forced to leave their job**

Figure 2.5 summarises findings for mothers who felt forced to leave their jobs. The relative importance of each characteristic is illustrated by the size of the box. Although the sizes of the boxes are illustrative of the sense of the relationship between variable, they are not exactly proportionate to the strength of the relationship between variables. The boxes to the right of the figure show the groups of mothers most likely to report this negative or possibly discriminatory experience.

**Figure 2. 5 Demographic and employment drivers of feeling forced to leave their jobs**



The key drivers of whether mothers felt forced to leave their jobs were:

- length of service prior to maternity leave;
- occupation.

Length of service prior to maternity leave was found to be almost twice as important in determining whether mothers felt forced to leave their jobs, than the second most important factor: occupation. Length of service and occupation were the two dominant factors; between them they were more than twice as important as all other factors put together.

Mothers with less than a year’s service were twice as likely as average to say they felt forced out of their job. Whereas mothers with more than five years of service to their employer before going on maternity leave were half as likely as average to say they had experienced this.

Mothers working in Skilled trades occupations (for example, chefs, gardeners, car mechanics, clothing manufacturers or carpet fitters) were particularly likely to feel

forced to leave their job: they were five times more likely than average to have said this had happened to them.

Respondents in Administrative and secretarial occupations (for example, office managers, legal secretaries, government revenue officers or personal assistants); Sales and customer service occupations (for example, sales and retail assistants; market and street traders and assistants; call and contact centre occupations); Professional occupations (for example, chemical scientists; civil engineers; IT project and programme managers; pharmacists; nurses; journalists, newspaper and periodical editors) and Associate professional and technical occupations (for example, civil engineering technicians; paramedics; police and community support officers; graphic designers; and estate agents) were less likely than average to feel forced to leave their job.

Other employment and demographic characteristics found to be important (though less so than length of service or occupation) were:

- industrial sector;
- whether or not they had a long-term physical or mental health condition;
- religion; and
- whether their employer recognised a trade union.

Mothers working in the Utilities sector were most likely to have felt forced to leave their job; three times as likely as average. Those in the Public Administration and Real Estate and Business sectors were around half as likely as average to say they felt forced to leave their job.

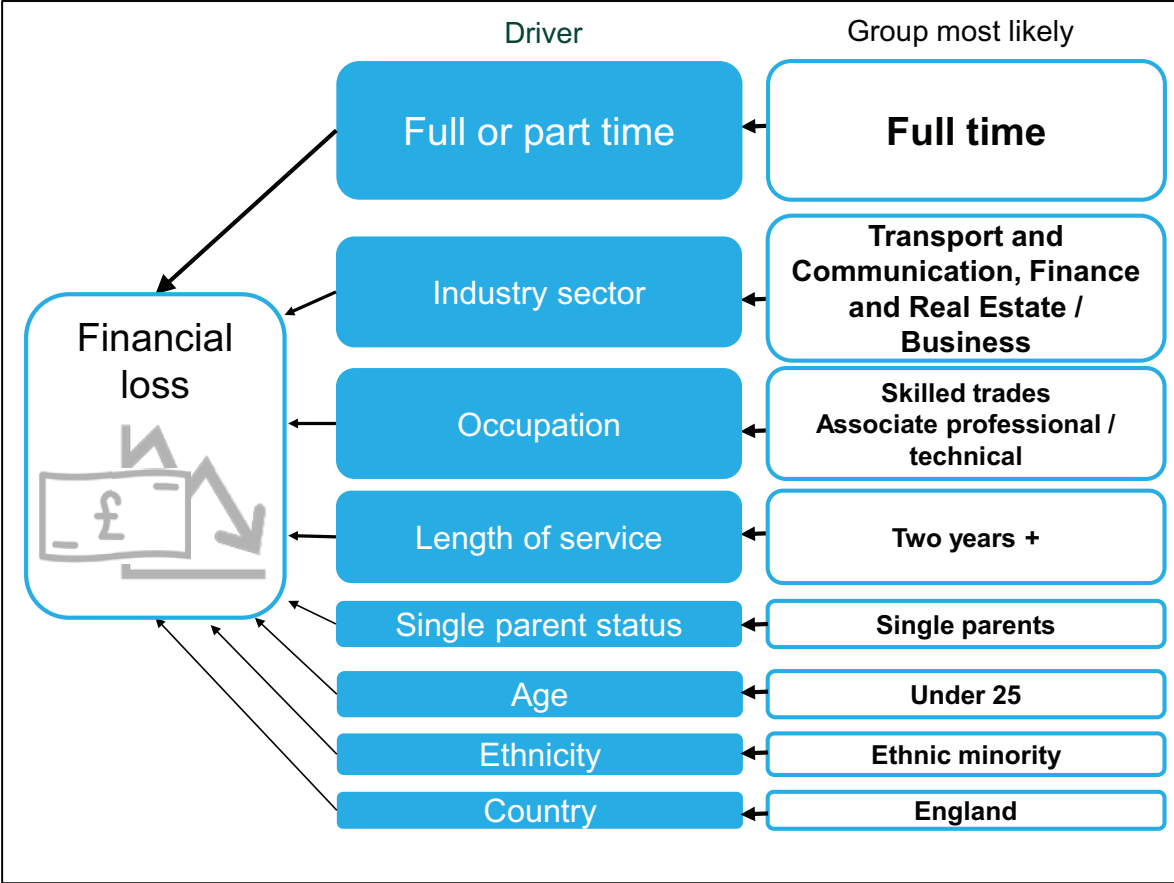
Having a long-term physical or mental health condition meant mothers were more likely to have said they felt forced to leave their job. The same is true for mothers who described themselves as having no religion, compared with those with a religion other than Christianity (including Islam, Hinduism, Judaism, Sikhism and Buddhism).

Mothers who worked for an employer that did not recognise a trade union were more likely than average to report being forced to leave their job.

## Mothers most likely to report financial loss

Figure 2.6 summarises the most important characteristics in determining financial loss and the group of mothers most likely to report this within each characteristic.

**Figure 2. 6 Demographic and employment drivers of mothers reporting financial loss**



The four main factors driving whether a mother reported financial loss were:

- whether she worked full or part time;
- industrial sector;
- occupation;
- length of service.

The other factors shown in Figure 2.6 (whether a single parent; age; ethnicity; and country) had an influence in determining the likelihood of mothers reporting financial loss, albeit to a lesser extent.

Mothers working full-time were almost twice as likely to say they had suffered financial loss as those working part-time.

As with feeling forced to leave their job, those working in Skilled trades occupations were particularly at risk of reporting financial loss; three times more likely than average. Mothers working in the Transport and Communication sector were twice as likely as average to report financial loss.

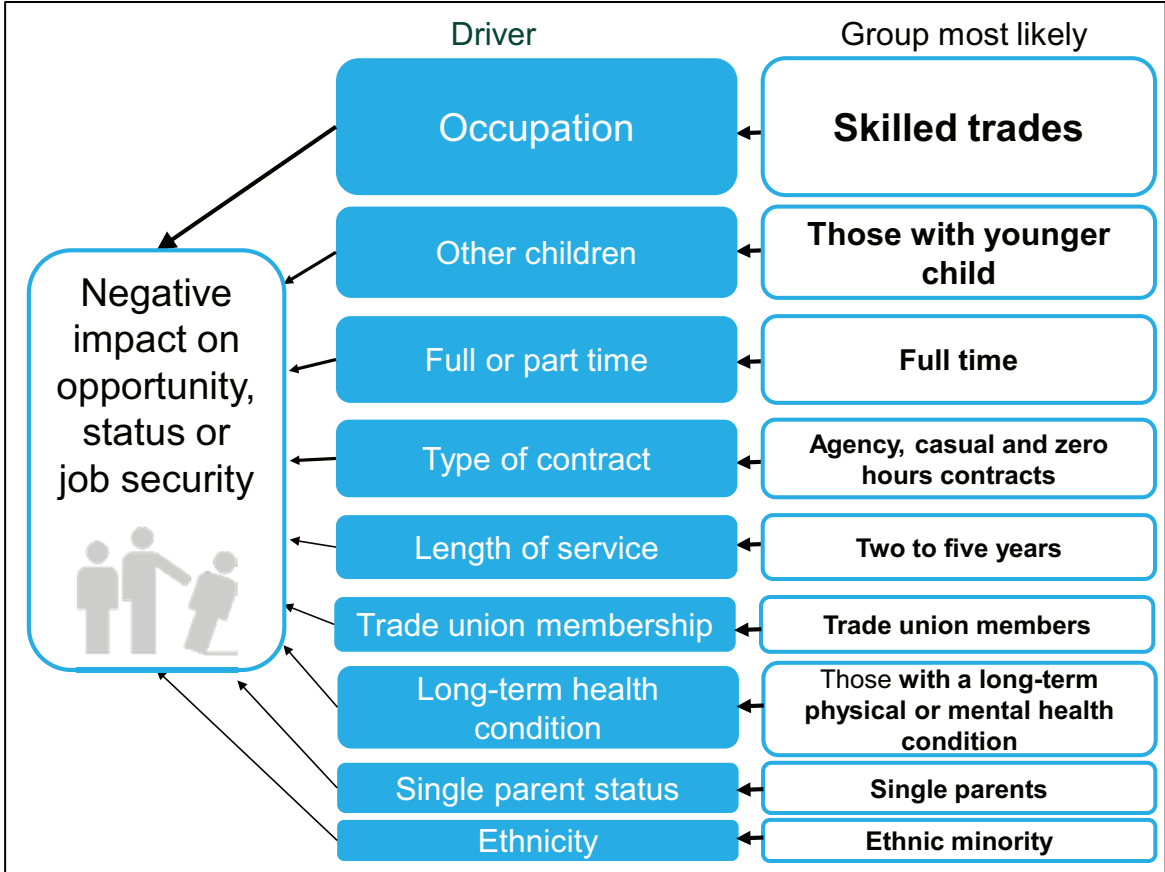
Mothers in Associate professional and technical occupations, and those working in the Real Estate and Business sector, were more likely to report financial loss (they had been less likely than average to report feeling forced to leave their jobs).

Whereas those employed for less than a year before maternity leave started had been more at risk of feeling forced to leave their job, those who had worked for two or more years were more at risk of reporting financial loss.

### Mothers most likely to say they experienced a negative impact on opportunity, status or job security

Figure 2.7 below shows the same analysis for the category of negative or possibly discriminatory experience relating to negative impact on opportunity, status or job security. (Opportunity, status or job security refers to areas such as missing out on promotion or training opportunities, removal of duties or being treated with less respect or threatened with dismissal or put under pressure to hand in their notice or leave. For a full list of what is captured under this phrase see table 2.1).

**Figure 2. 7 Demographic and employment drivers of negative impact on opportunity, status or job security**



Occupation was the main factor driving whether a mother said they had experienced negative impact on opportunity, status or job security. As with feeling forced to leave their job and financial loss, it was mothers in Skilled trade occupations that were most likely to be at risk; they were more than twice as likely as average to report a negative impact on opportunity, status or job security. Those working in Sales and customer services occupations and Elementary occupations were around half as likely as average to have said they experienced a negative impact on opportunity, status or job security.

Other important characteristics in determining whether a mother reported a negative impact on opportunity, status or job security were:

- whether they had other children;
- whether they were full- or part-time;
- type of contract;
- length of service.

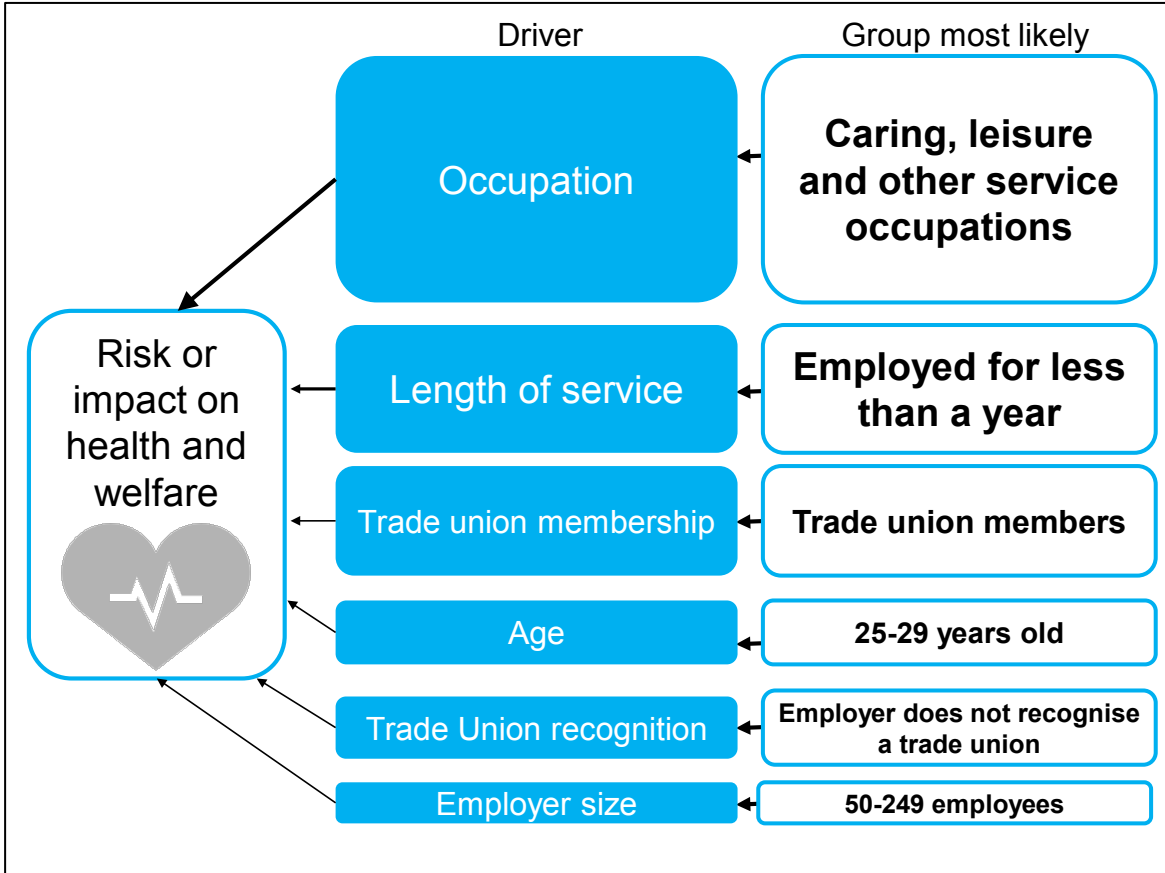
Mothers with another child younger than the child sampled for in this survey; mothers working full-time; mothers on agency, casual or zero-hours contracts; and respondents having worked at their employer between two and five years were all more likely to report a negative impact on their career.

The other factors shown in Figure 2.7 (trade union membership; disability status; single parent status; and ethnicity) had an influence in determining whether a mother reported a negative impact on opportunity, status or job security, albeit to a lesser extent.

**Mothers most likely to say they had experienced a risk to, or impact on, their health and welfare**

Figure 2.8 summarises the most important characteristics in determining risk to, or impact on, health and welfare and the group of mothers most likely to report this within each characteristic.

**Figure 2. 8 Demographic and employment drivers of risk or impact on health and welfare**





Occupation was again the dominant factor in driving likelihood of experiencing a risk to, or impact on, health and welfare, although in this case it was mothers in Caring, leisure and other service occupations that were most likely to say this.

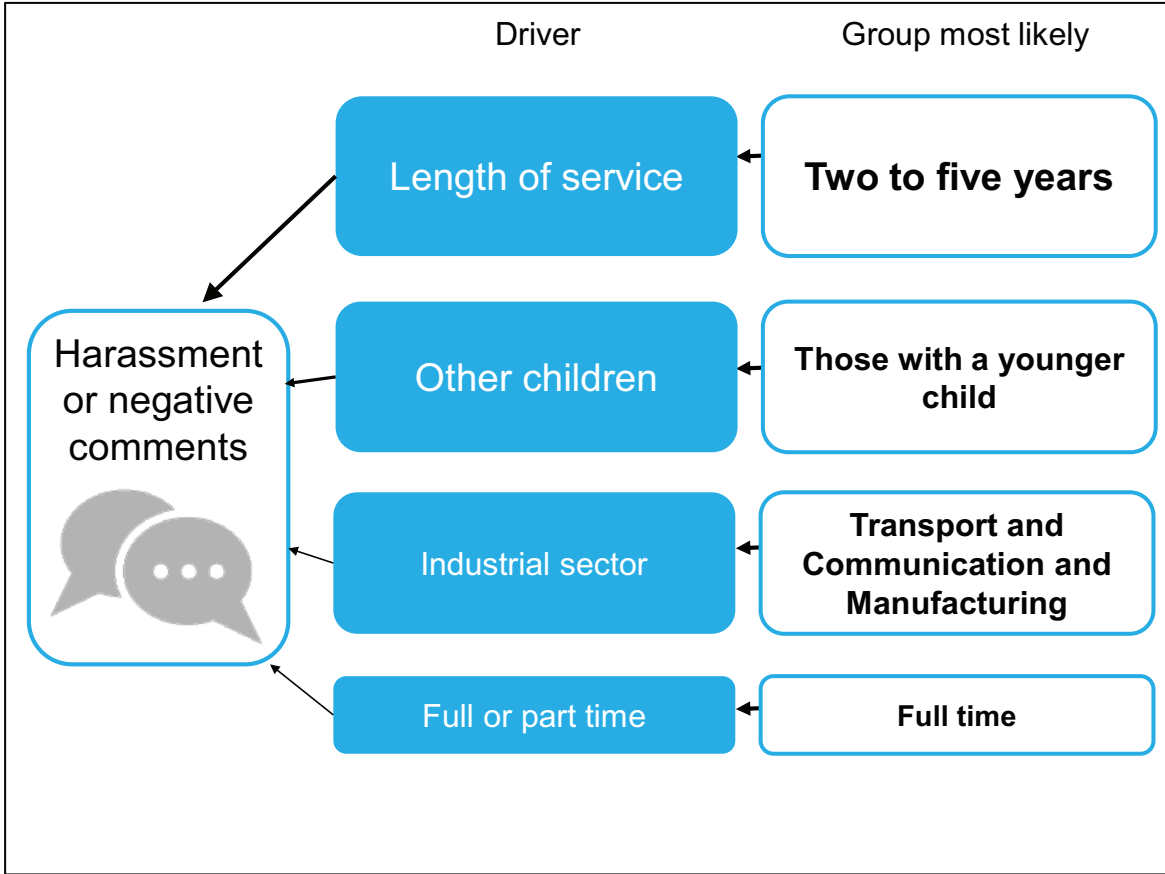
As with feeling forced to leave their job, mothers who had worked for their employer for less than a year were most likely to say they had experienced a risk to or impact on their health or welfare (and were almost twice as likely as those who had five years or more service).

Trade union membership also had an impact, with mothers who were trade union members more likely to report a risk to or impact on their health and welfare. The other factors shown in Figure 2.8 (age, whether the employer recognised a trade union and employer size) were less important, although still had an influence.

### Mothers most likely to say they experienced harassment or negative comments

Figure 2.9 summarises the most important characteristics in determining whether mothers experienced harassment or negative comments.

**Figure 2. 9 Demographic and employment drivers of harassment or negative comments**



The three most important characteristics driving the likelihood of mothers experiencing harassment or negative comments were of similar importance and were: length of service; whether mother had other children; and industrial sector. Whether the mother was working full- or part-time was also a driver, although to a slightly lesser degree than the other three factors.

Those with two to five years of service for their employer were most likely to report experiencing harassment or negative comments. This is the same group of mothers more likely to report a negative impact on opportunity, status or job security or financial loss.

Again, as with negative impact on opportunity, status or job security, mothers with an additional child younger than the child sampled for this survey (who was between nine and 24 months old) were twice as likely as those that did not have a younger child to say they had experienced negative comments.

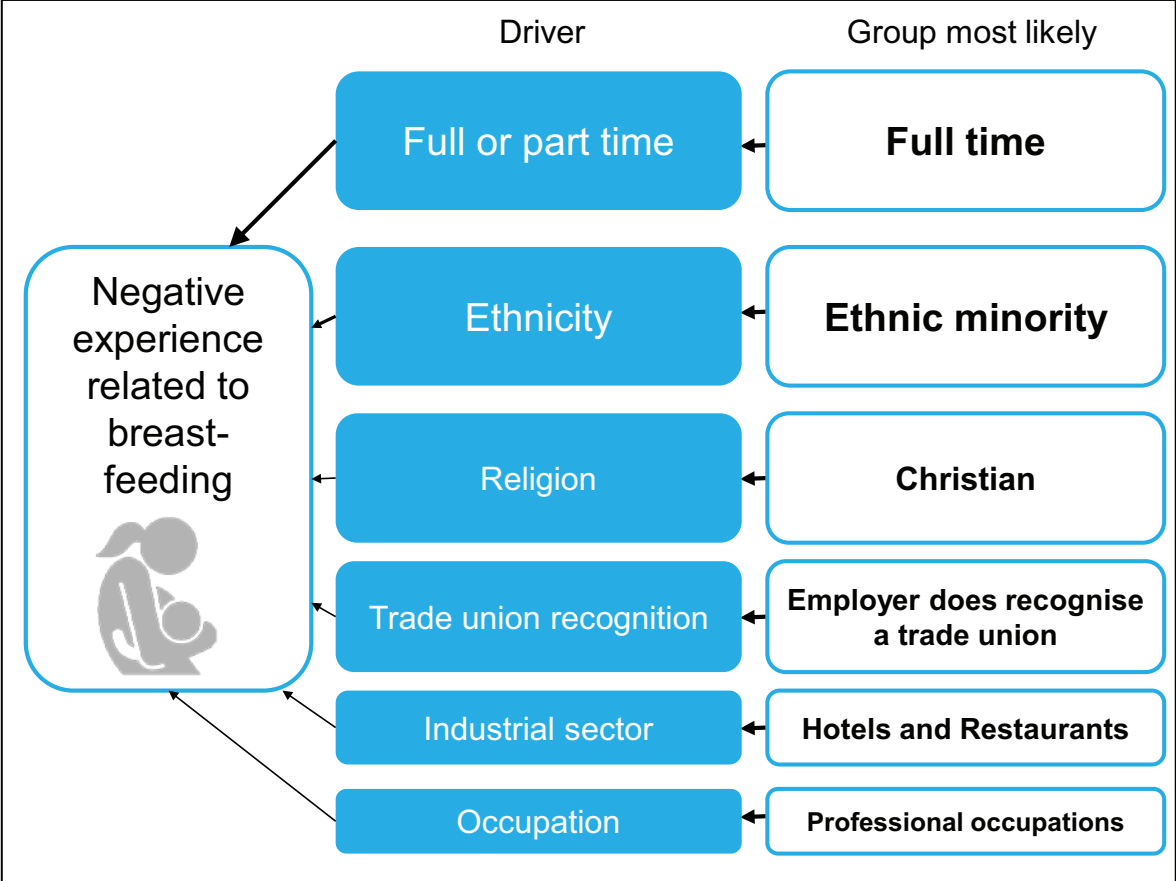
Mothers working in the Transport and Communication and Manufacturing sectors were more likely to say they had experienced harassment or negative comments and were around twice as likely as those working in the Education sector where mothers were least likely to report this.

### Mothers most likely to say they had a negative experience related to breastfeeding

The most important characteristics driving mothers reporting a negative experience related to breastfeeding are detailed in Figure 2.10. The most dominant factors were:

- whether full or part time;
- ethnicity;
- religion;
- whether the employer recognised a trade union.

**Figure 2. 10 Demographic and employment drivers of negative experience related to breastfeeding**



Mothers working full-time were almost twice as likely as those working part-time to say they had a negative experience related to breastfeeding.

As with financial loss and negative impact on opportunity, status or job security, ethnic minority mothers were more likely than average to say they had a negative experience related to breastfeeding; almost twice as likely as white British mothers. Mothers identifying as Christians were also almost twice as likely as average to report a negative experience related to breastfeeding, compared with mothers who identified with a religion other than Christianity (including Islam; Hinduism; Judaism; Sikhism; and Buddhism) who were half as likely as average.

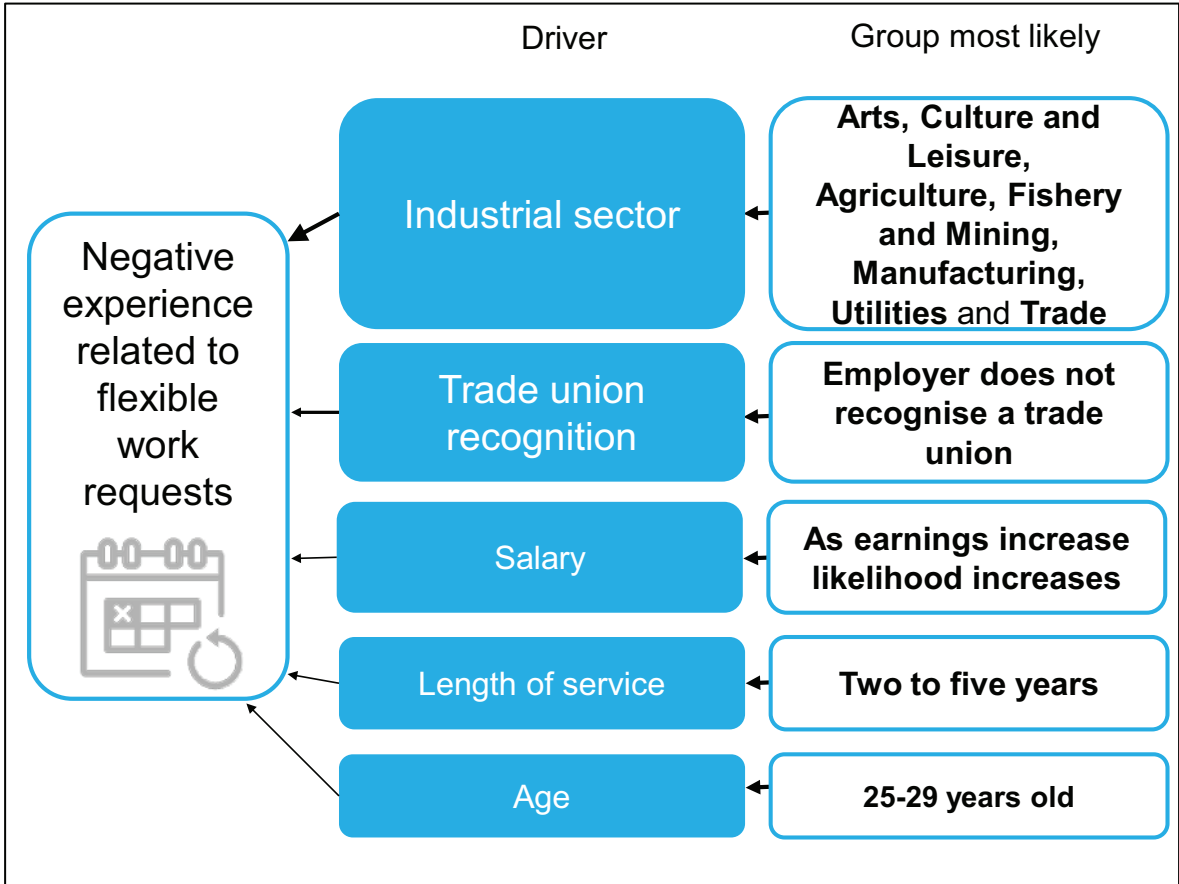
While the absence of trade union recognition was associated with mothers feeling forced to leave their job or experiencing risk to or impact on their health and welfare, a negative experience related to breastfeeding was almost twice as likely to be reported by mothers working for an employer that recognised a trade union, compared to mothers working for an employer that did not.

Other important factors in driving negative experience related to breastfeeding, albeit to a lesser extent, were industrial sector; mothers working in the Hotels and Restaurants sector were more than twice as likely as average to experience this. Occupation was also important; mothers working in Professional occupations were almost twice as likely as average to experience this. Mothers in Professional occupations were more likely to be breastfeeding around the time they returned to work from maternity leave, so were more likely to be in a situation where they might have a negative experience related to breastfeeding at work.

**Mothers most likely to say they had a negative experience related to flexible working requests**

Figure 2.11 summarises the most important characteristics in determining negative experience related to flexible working requests and the group of mothers most likely to report this within each characteristic.

**Figure 2. 11: Demographic and employment drivers of negative experience related to flexible working requests**



The main driver of negative experience related to flexible working requests was industrial sector, followed by whether the employer recognised a trade union. Between them these factors were more important than all others put together.

Mothers working in the Arts, Culture and Leisure; Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing and Mining; Manufacturing; Utilities; and Trade sectors were all more likely than average to say they had a negative experience related to flexible working requests (all between one and a half and two times as likely as average).

Mothers who worked for employers that did not recognise a trade union were also more likely than those working for employers who did recognise one to say they had a negative experience related to flexible working requests.

Salary was an important factor too: the more a mother was earning, the more likely she was to have reported a negative experience related to flexible working requests.

### Mothers most likely to say they had any other negative experience

The most important characteristics in determining any other negative experience - are detailed in Figure 2.12.

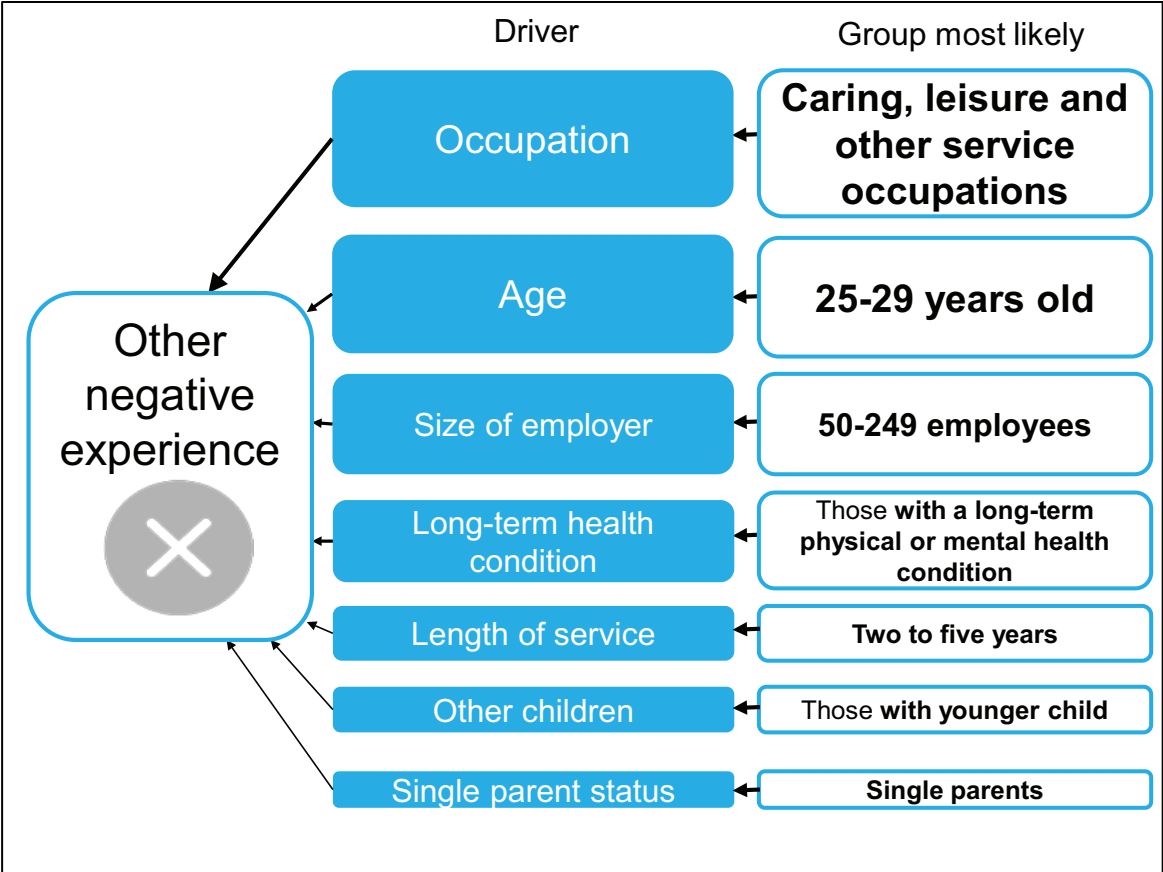
Mothers' occupation and age were the most dominant characteristics in driving other negative experience.

Mothers working in Caring, leisure and other service occupations were most likely to report other negative experience.

Mothers aged 25 to 29 were most at risk of reporting any other negative experience and almost twice as likely to report this as mothers aged 40 and over.

Those working for employers with 50–249 employees and those with a long-term physical or mental health condition were more likely than average to say they had any other negative experience.

**Figure 2. 12: Demographic and employment drivers of any other negative experiences**



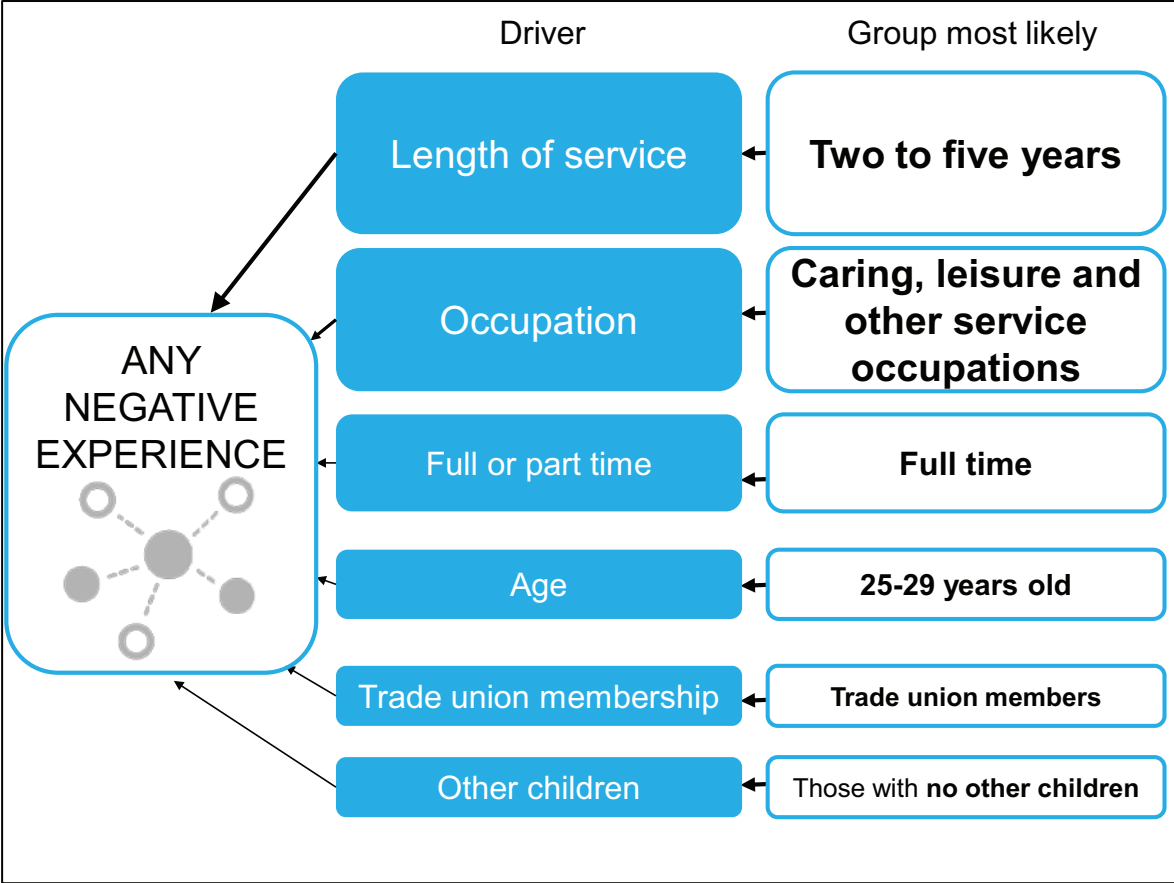
Other characteristics important, to a lesser extent, in influencing other negative experience were:

- length of service;
- whether they had other children;
- whether they were a single parent.

**Mothers most likely to say they had negative or possibly discriminatory experiences**

Overall, length of service and occupation were found to be the most important factors driving whether or not mothers reported any category of negative or possibly discriminatory experience (Figure 2.13).

**Figure 2. 13: Demographic and employment drivers of negative or possibly discriminatory experiences**



Length of service and occupation were more important than all other factors put together in determining whether or not a mother reported a negative or possibly discriminatory experience.

Mothers who had worked for their employer for more than five years were less likely than average to report a negative or possibly discriminatory experience, whereas those that had worked at their employer for between two and five years were more likely to report this than all other groups. This finding is driven by those who had worked for their employer for between two and five years being more likely to say they had experienced a negative or possibly discriminatory negative impact on opportunity, status or job security; financial loss; or harassment or negative comments.

Mothers who worked in Caring, leisure and other service occupations were more likely than average to report a negative or possibly discriminatory experience. This is driven mothers working in this occupation being more likely to have said they experienced a risk to, or impact on, their health or welfare; or some other type of negative experience. Those working in Administrative and secretarial occupations

and Elementary occupations were the least likely to report any negative or possibly discriminatory experience.

Mothers working full-time were more likely than those working part-time to report any negative or possibly discriminatory experience.



## 3. Nature of negative or possibly discriminatory experiences

This chapter looks in more detail at the types of negative or possibly discriminatory experiences that make up each overall category reported in Chapter 2. It reports on the proportion of mothers who experienced each type of negative or possibly discriminatory experience and uses findings and case studies from the follow-up interviews to illustrate mothers' experiences in more depth.

### 3.1 Summary

Most mothers who felt forced to leave their jobs did so because they said they had been treated so badly they felt they had to leave (9%). Experiences were varied and covered all stages of pregnancy, maternity leave and return to work.

Financial loss was most often reported due to mothers failing to gain a promotion they felt they deserved; being otherwise side-lined (10%); or having a reduction in their salary or bonus (8%). In the follow-up interviews, some mothers described feeling effectively demoted.

Mothers who experienced an impact on opportunity, status or job security were most likely to report feeling that requests for flexible working had led to negative consequences (24%). Other reasons mothers felt pregnancy had impacted on their career included: being given unsuitable work or workloads (15%); not being adequately informed about promotion opportunities while on maternity leave (9%); or being treated with less respect or feeling their opinion was less valued (8%).

Where mothers reported a risk to, or impact on, their health or wellbeing this was most often in relation to experiencing physical health or stress levels being negatively impacted (15%), or not being allowed to work flexibly; start later or finish earlier; or to take more breaks, despite asking to (15%). In addition, one in 10 mothers were discouraged from attending antenatal appointments in work time. One in 10 mothers had risks identified in a risk assessment, where not all of these were tackled by their employer, and a similar share of mothers identified risks themselves, not all of which their employer tackled.

Mothers saying they received offensive or negative comments reported a range of experiences including comments that they felt were intended to be 'banter' but were felt to be deeply offensive; unsympathetic comments; and systematic bullying.

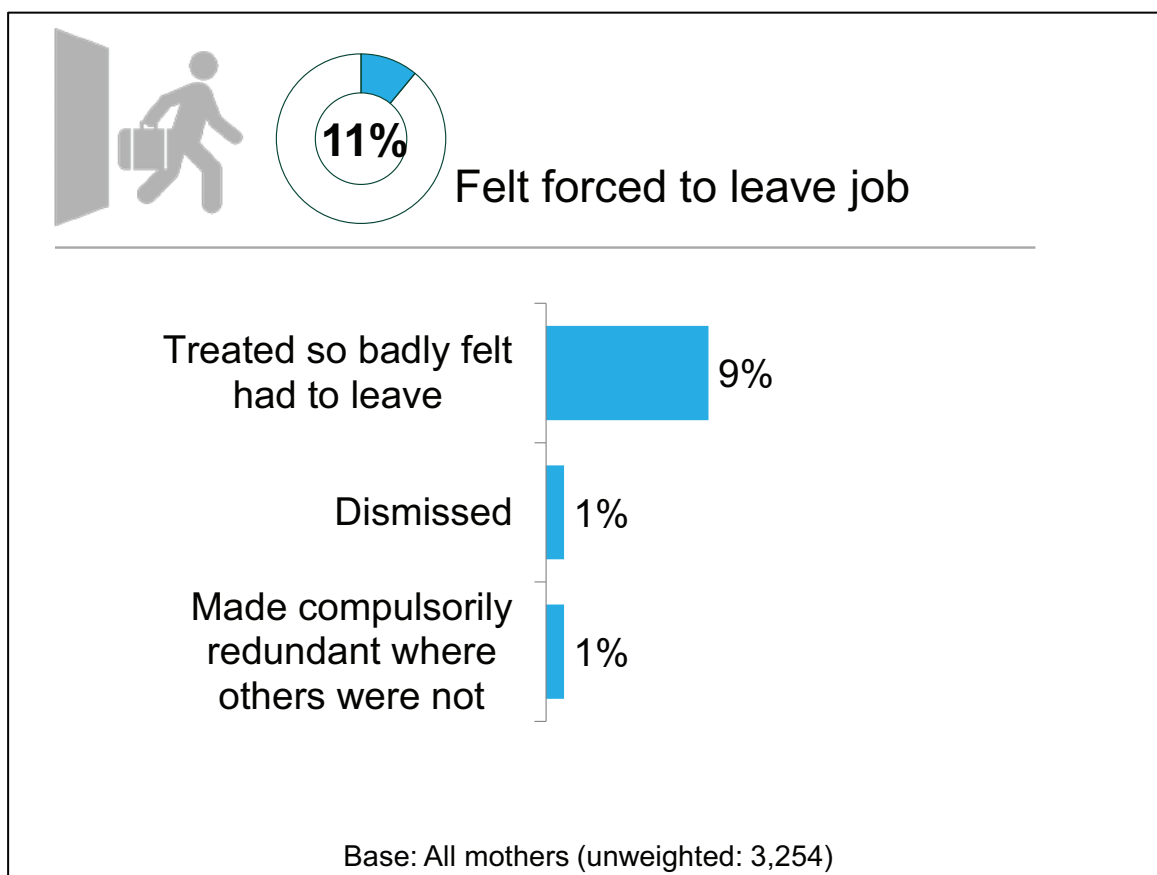
- One in 10 mothers said they were treated in a way that made them feel humiliated or belittled.
- One in 12 (8%) mothers reported experiencing activity that intimidated or offended them.

- One in 11 (9%) mothers said that as a result of their flexible working requests being approved they received negative comments from either their employer or colleagues.
- One in 14 mothers (7%) said they received or heard offensive comments from their colleagues.
- One in 25 mothers (4%) said they received or heard offensive comments from their employer.

### 3.2 Felt forced to leave job

Overall, one in nine mothers (11%) reported that they felt forced to leave their job. This included one in 11 (9%) mothers feeling treated so poorly they felt they had to leave; 1% being made compulsorily redundant where others in their workplace were not; and 1% being dismissed (Figure 3.1).

**Figure 3. 1: Mothers who felt forced to leave their job in detail**



Mothers working in the Public administration sector (3%) and mothers working in Professional occupations (6%) were less likely to have felt forced to leave their jobs compared to 11% on average. Findings from the multivariate analysis also suggest that mothers working in the Utilities sector were three times as likely as average to feel forced to leave their job. On the other hand, mothers in Skilled trades (38%) and Caring, leisure and other service occupations (19%) were more likely to report feeling forced to leave their jobs than average (11%).

The follow-up interviews revealed some circumstances in which mothers felt treated so badly they felt they had to leave. For example, one mother had left because their employer told them they were not eligible for any maternity pay; others reported their employer reacting negatively to their pregnancy and not being willing to support them. This led to a feeling that they had no choice but to leave. All of these mothers thought it would be very hard to move to a new employer while pregnant, partly because they assumed employers would be reluctant to hire a pregnant woman, but also because of the 'stress' and anxiety it might cause them.

Some mothers decided not to return after maternity leave or only returned for a short time before leaving because they felt badly treated by their employer. For example:

- being offered unsuitable hours (for example, finishing too late)
- being granted flexible working but feeling this was resented by managers and colleagues
- feeling that they received a lack of support from their employer during their pregnancy. For example, poor risk management, being told there would be little opportunity for progression once they had children, to a breakdown in their relationship with the small business owners. For a group of women this lack of support led them to feel that returning was not an option, even though they wanted to work and went on to find new jobs. Emma<sup>6</sup> is part of this group and her case study is below; and
- One mother knew her maternity cover had been given a permanent contract, and no contact from her employer during maternity leave led her to assume that there was no job for her to return to.

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<sup>6</sup> Names in italics are pseudonyms.

Case study: Example of feeling so poorly treated in pregnancy and on return to work, the mother felt she had to leave her job after returning to work, sales assistant for coffee shop chain, earning £5,000–£9,999 a year, aged 20–24

*Emma* worked as a sales assistant at a large coffee chain. She reported having a negative experience of working while pregnant, feeling that her employer was not very understanding of her needs and she said she received negative comments throughout her pregnancy from her supervisor.

*'My supervisor... would make snide little comments. I remember once she asked me to bring some milk up from the fridges downstairs ...and it was heavy, even if you weren't pregnant....I said: "No...I can't I'm seven months pregnant." ...I'll hurt myself." And she said: "Look you're only pregnant, you're not poorly." 'And then another time ...I was talking to somebody else ...I just said: "Oh I feel so sick." And she said: "It's self-inflicted so we don't want to hear about it."*

*Emma* was working full-time in the early months of her pregnancy but said she was told she wasn't entitled to maternity pay as her contract was only for 12 hours per week. She reported she had to threaten her Head Office with a formal complaint before they agreed to base her maternity pay calculations on the average number of hours she worked per week. *Emma* felt there was no process in place to deal with the rights of pregnant employees so she sought advice from family and research online herself to find out what should be happening, for example when to hand in her MAT B form. She thought her employer was trying to encourage her to leave as they wanted to employ students and not people with families who might make things 'complicated.'

*'It was only when I ...said, "Well no, I'm going to take this further, I'm going to go to Citizens Advice, I'm going to put a complaint in," that they ...said, "Right OK then, we'll average out your hours and we will give you your maternity leave".*

On return from maternity leave *Emma* said she could work three particular days a week (when her partner was available for childcare), but any shifts on those days. This was agreed but she ended up feeling awkward and guilty. She also felt overlooked for training and development because she worked part-time. *Emma* thought that colleagues also resented that she did not work weekends as they did not know she did not have childcare. She felt she had to leave, and found another job.

*'I just felt like no matter how hard I worked, because I only worked those days, they just overlooked me. It wasn't appreciated it was just, 'Oh well, she's only here for a couple of days so . . .' I'd come in and something would have changed and I say, "When did this happen?" and they'd say things like, "Well you'd know if you were here more often." Things like that and so that made it difficult. My colleagues were very much like, "Oh she gets every weekend off, that's not fair." But I would have*

*worked weekends if I could but they didn't see it like that. They just saw it as well she's got the weekend off so I can't have it off.'*

### 3.3 Financial loss

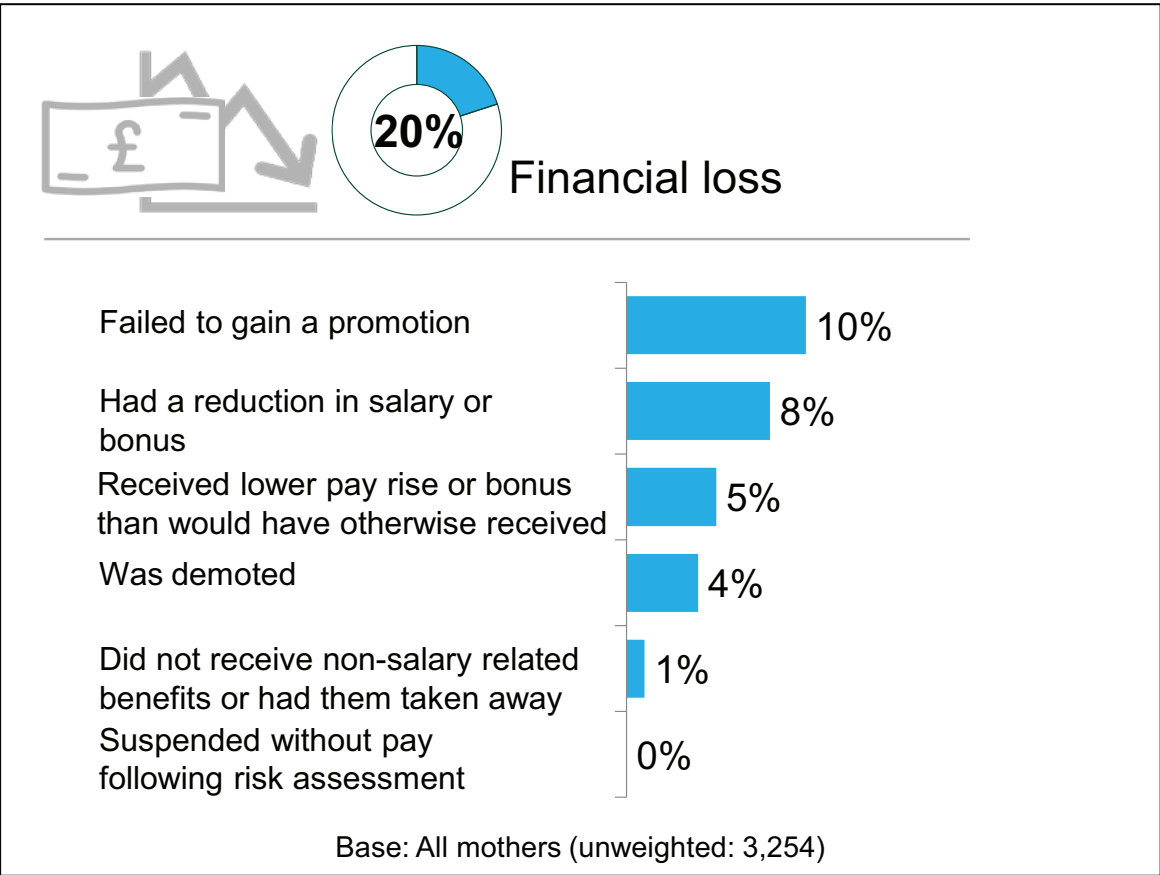
Mothers who experienced a financial loss following announcement of their pregnancy were most likely to have failed to gain a promotion they felt they deserved or were otherwise side-lined; one in 10 mothers reported this had been the case (Figure 3.2). One in 12 mothers (8%) said they had a reduction in their salary or bonus and one in 20 said they received a lower pay rise or bonus than their peers. 4% of mothers said they were demoted and a further 1% did not receive non-salary related benefits (for example, company car or mobile phone) or had them taken away.

Mothers in Wales (15%) and Scotland (14%) were less likely to report experiencing financial loss than mothers in England (21%). However, mothers earning more than £40,000 or more a year (31%) were more likely to report financial loss than average (20%). Utilities and Transport and communications sector employee mothers were twice as likely to report a financial loss, according to the multivariate analysis.

In the follow-up interviews there were several examples of mothers who felt they had missed out on promotions as a result of their pregnancy, or were effectively demoted. Some were taken aback at how their career progression had stalled, and felt their employer had little interest in them while they had young children.

In the employers' survey, one in five (17%) believed that pregnant women and new mothers were less interested in career progression and promotion than other employees. 7% of employers felt that pregnant women and those returning from maternity leave were less committed to work than other employees.

**Figure 3. 2: Financial loss reported by respondents in detail**



Case study: Example of a mother reporting being given more basic duties and not being promoted when she felt she was on track to, receptionist/administration in health sector, earning £10,000–£19,999 a year, aged 25–29

Rosalie worked as a receptionist in the health sector, she was considered a senior member of the team and felt she was on track to get a promotion to manager. Once she told her employer she was pregnant this appeared to Rosalie to no longer be on offer and a colleague was promoted instead.

She returned to the same role after nine months on maternity leave but felt she had been demoted as her co-workers continued to do the more responsible tasks she used to do, and she felt she was ‘stuck’ with more basic duties. She felt that a team member she had trained before her maternity leave seemed to assume she now had authority over her. Rosalie raised this with her manager who reportedly took no action.

*‘One of the staff who I trained before I left....she said: “And what have you been doing since morning?” And I was gobsmacked...They employed four or five people when I went on maternity leave, and she has authority over those people, so when I came*

*back, in her head she thought I was part of those people [that she has authority over].'*

Rosalie said that she felt shocked that her decision to have a family appeared to have reduced her employer's interest in her career. She explained that she would like to have more children, but thinks she should wait in case they do decide to give her the promotion. She had begun to apply for other jobs as she felt demotivated and unvalued.

### 3.4 Negative impact on opportunity, status or job security

Opportunity, status or job security refers to areas such as promotion and training opportunities, removal of duties and being treated with less respect and threatened with dismissal or put under pressure to hand in their notice or leave. For a full list of what is captured under this category, see Table 2.1.

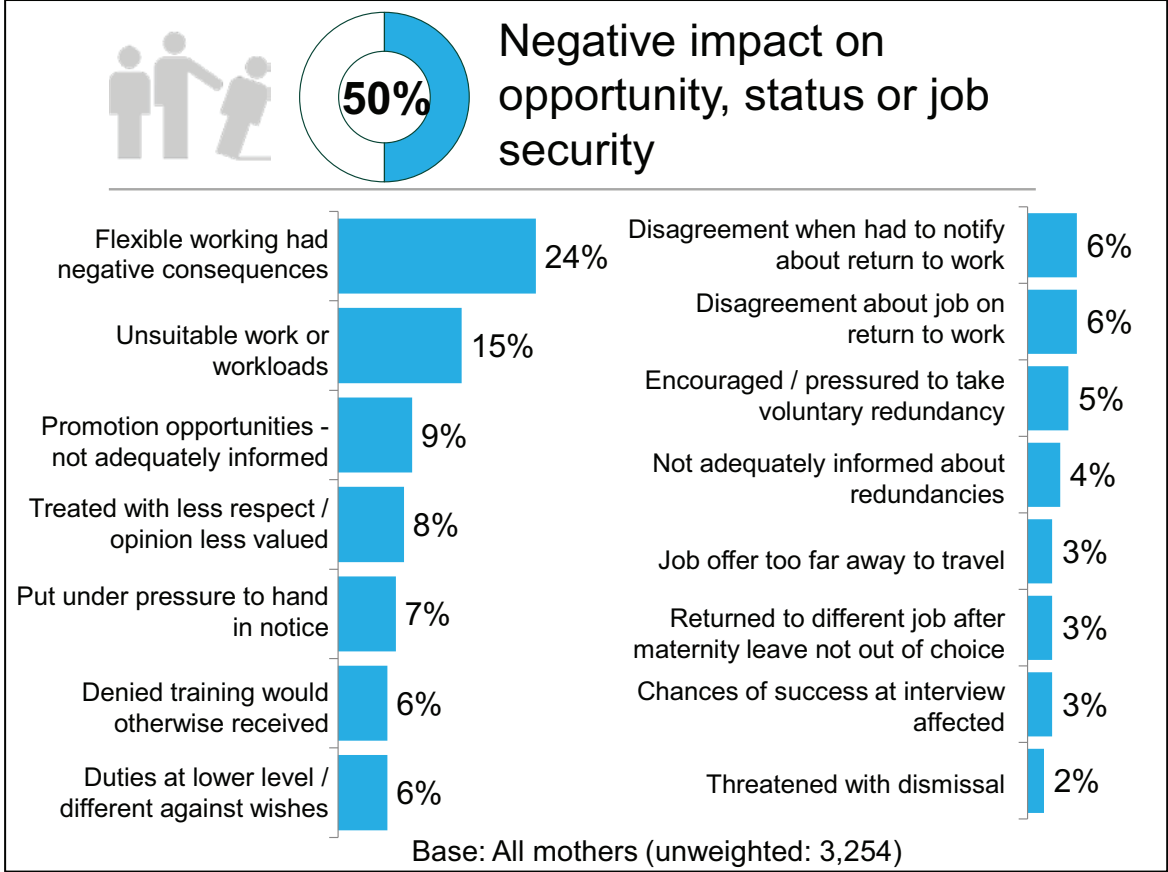
Half of mothers felt their pregnancy had a negative impact on their career (Figure 3.3). This was largely driven by a quarter of mothers (24%) who reported that having requests for flexible working approved had led to negative consequences. When asked specifically about flexible working, negative consequences included feeling:

- uncomfortable asking for time off or for additional flexibility (18%)
- they had fewer opportunities than they otherwise would have had or compared to colleagues at the same level (16%)
- they were receiving negative comments from their employer or colleagues (9%),
- they were being given more junior tasks than before their pregnancy (8%).

Issues about flexible working and making flexible working requests are explored in more detail in Chapter 9.

Other ways in which mothers felt their pregnancy had an impact on their careers included feeling they were given unsuitable work or workloads (15%), that they were not adequately informed about promotion opportunities while on maternity leave (9%) or treated with less respect or their opinion was less valued (8%).

**Figure 3. 3: Negative impact on opportunity, status or job security in detail**



A lower share of mothers in Elementary (37%) and Administrative and secretarial occupations (44%) reported a negative impact on opportunity, status or job security compared to an average of 50%. Mothers working on agency, casual or zero hours contracts were more likely to report a negative impact on opportunity, status or job security (61%) from the point at which they told their employer they were pregnant.

**Case study: Example of a mother feeling her pregnancy had an impact on her career progression, financial collections advisor, earning £10,000–£19,999 a year, aged 20–24**

*Rebecca* works as an administrator in the Finance sector for a medium-sized company. She was generally happy with her employer during her pregnancy and when she returned to work after maternity leave. Her employer accepted her request to work part-time. She now feels overlooked for progression and training opportunities and feels that full-time staff are given priority and she does not feel part-time staff are treated equally. Although *Rebecca* feels that her career is now not



such a priority for her, she had expected to have the opportunities to progress if she wanted and feels disappointed that she can't.

*'In my previous life, I did command respect and feel bright but you don't get that as a part-time administrator. There are jokes with the full-timers about leaving early, being a skiver, but I come home to do my other, harder, job. I comment with my colleague that we miss out on a lot of information being part-time, the minute you're not there you're forgotten.'*

### 3.5 Risk or impact on health and welfare

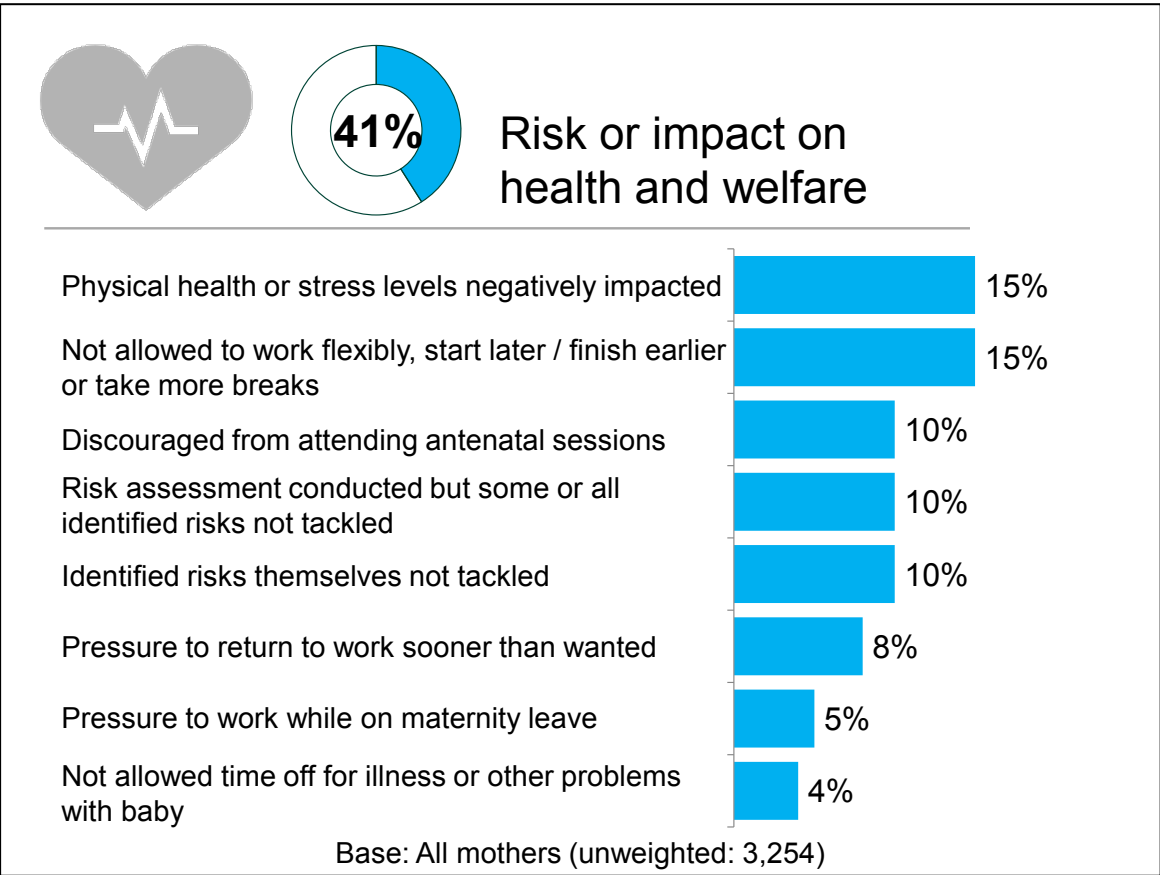
Four in 10 mothers (41%) experienced some risk to or impact on their health and welfare. Mothers in Public administration (31%), Real estate and business (35%) sectors and mothers earning more than £40,000 a year (35%) were less likely to report experiencing a risk to, or impact on their health or welfare than average (41%). A greater share of mothers in Caring, leisure and other service (54%) and those on agency, casual or zero hours contracts (50%) reported a risk or impact to their health and welfare.

Figure 3.4 shows most commonly this was where women said their physical health or stress levels were negatively affected during pregnancy (15%) or where their employers' refused their requests to work flexibly; start later or finish earlier; or take more breaks during their working day (15%).

One in 10 mothers (10%) said they were discouraged from attending antenatal appointments during work time. The same proportion reported that their employers identified risks in a risk assessment but had not tackled them all (10%) or that they had identified risks themselves and the employer had not tackled them all (10%).

One in 12 mothers (8%) said they felt pressured to return sooner than they wanted after maternity leave and one in 20 said they felt pressured to work while on maternity leave.

**Figure 3. 4: Risk to, or impact on, health and welfare in detail**



After returning to work, 4% of mothers said they were not allowed time off work for illness of the baby or for other problems with the baby; these were more likely to be young mothers (9% under 25 and 6% aged 25–29, compared to 2% aged 30–34; 3% aged 35–39; and 1% aged 40 or over). They were also more likely to:

- have a long term physical or mental health condition (11%) compared to 4% without one;
- work in Caring, leisure or other service occupations (10%);
- work for an employer with less than 50 employees (6%), compared to a medium (3%) or large company (3%);
- work in the Health and Social Work sector (6%);
- earn less than £30,000 (5%) compared to 1% earning £30,000 or more; and
- be a single parent (9%) compared to 4% married/living with partner.

In the follow-up interviews a few mothers said that when they were pregnant, they were reportedly not allowed to take breaks or to sit down if their jobs involved standing for long hours. Sometimes, interviewees said that this was because women worked alone (for example, in a shop), or had client-facing duties (for example, hairdressers). A few mothers said that their employer made no arrangements to facilitate breaks; others felt their employers viewed taking breaks negatively and some mothers said that their managers insisted they make up the time later in the day.

*'[When I was pregnant] with twins I was very hungry and tired a lot of the time so I needed extra breaks and that was always met begrudgingly like: "You'll have to work an extra half hour if you want that break." which negates the point of having a break.'*

- Mother who reportedly had to make up time taken on breaks, optometrist working at small opticians, earning £40,000-£49,999 a year, aged 30-34

Mothers who were ill during pregnancy and felt that they were not supported often said this affected their stress levels as well as their health. Many who experienced severe morning sickness felt managers and colleagues did not take it seriously and thought their managers suspected them of exaggeration which led to further anxiety.

*'They had not heard of [hyperemesis gravidarum] before. Eventually one of the senior managers turned round and said, because I think Kate [Middleton] was pregnant then or there was something in the newspaper about it and he was: "You've got that." And the penny finally dropped that it wasn't me just skiving off or trying to make things difficult.'*

- Mother who felt her illness during pregnancy was not accepted by managers, regional manager for publishing company, earning £30,000-£39,000 a year, aged 30-34

**Case study: Example of mother's health affected due to reported health and safety issues not being tackled, administrator in medium sized financial company, earning £10,000 – £19,999 a year, aged 20–24**

Jyoti worked in a secretarial role at a medium sized company. As a result of her pregnancy she suffered from swollen feet. Her job involved carrying and sifting through boxes of paperwork, which she felt was a health and safety issue. She raised it with HR but felt they were reluctant to spend money on a filing cabinet.

*'Everything was in boxes and the boxes were just literally piled all behind my desk. They were filled with paperwork that we needed on a daily basis. So I'd have to carry them, obviously they say don't carry them but when you need to do your work you've got to do it...It was literally weeks before I went on maternity that they put cabinets in...my feet were absolutely huge, like you'd never seen feet like it, and I couldn't fit shoes on and they were well like: "You've got to, you can't wear flip flops, you have to put shoes on for health and safety." But its health and safety I can't put shoes on*

*that fitted and my midwife was like: "Well I'll just sign you off then if that's what they want to do." But obviously I wouldn't have got paid if I'd been signed off.'*

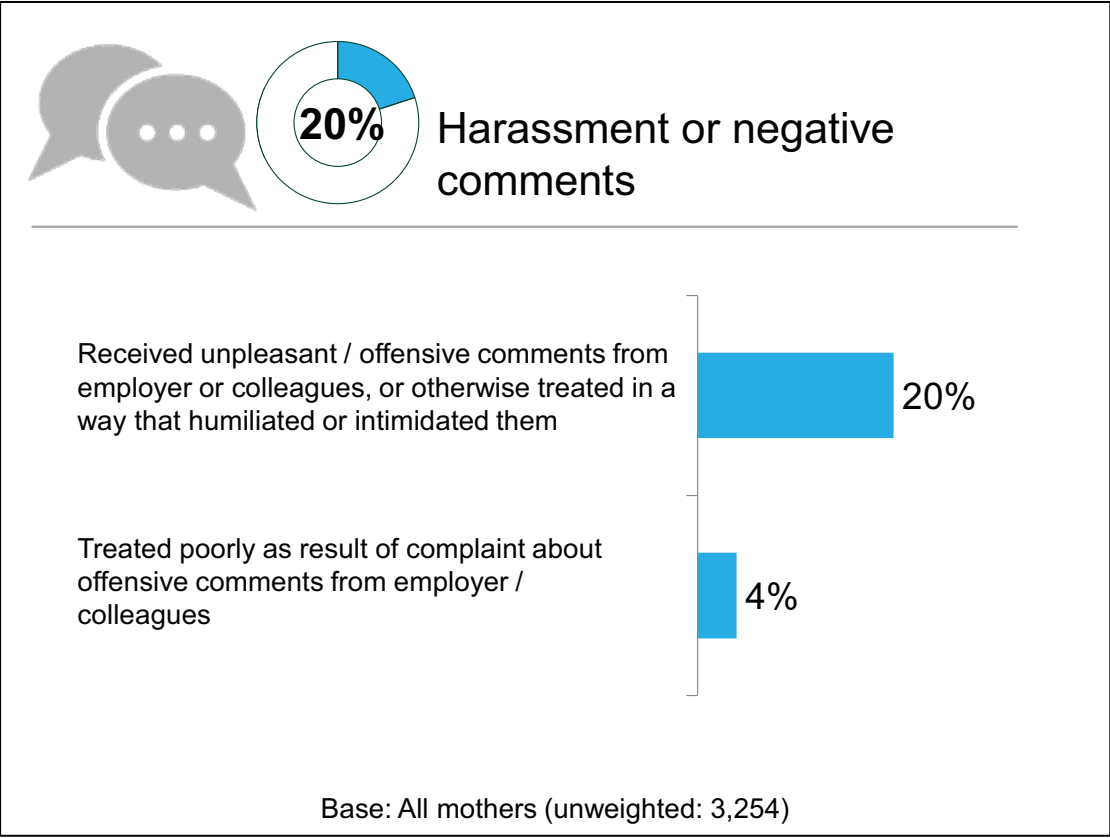
### 3.6 Harassment and negative comments

One in five mothers said they received or heard offensive or negative comments or were treated in a way that was humiliating, belittling, intimidating or offensive. One in 25 mothers (4%) said they were treated poorly as a result of complaining about offensive comments from either their employer or colleagues, (Figure 3.5). When asked specifically:

- One in 10 mothers said they were treated in a way that made them feel humiliated or belittled.
- One in 12 mothers (8%) reported experiencing activity that intimidated or offended them.
- One in 11 mothers (9%) said that as a result of their flexible working requests being approved they received negative comments from either their employer or colleagues.
- One in 14 mothers (7%) said they received or heard offensive comments from their colleagues.
- One in 25 (4%) mothers said they received or heard offensive comments from their employer.

The employers' survey found one in seven employers (15%) thought their employees could sometimes feel resentful of new mothers and pregnant colleagues. Four in five employers (82%) said they found it easy to manage the negative attitudes of other employees.

**Figure 3. 5: Experiencing harassment or negative comments and negative treatment as result of making a complaint**



Mothers in Wales (14%) were less likely to say they experienced harassment or negative comments from their employer or colleagues than average (20%).

In the follow-up interviews some women described their line managers and colleagues making negative comments related to pregnancy or new motherhood. These included flippant or unsympathetic comments, systematic bullying and threats about redundancy. Pregnant women and new mothers at all levels of responsibility, in different occupations and with different contracts experienced this.

There were three main categories of negative comments experienced:

1. Complaints about the inconvenience of a pregnancy – mothers claimed these were typically made by line managers, and could be flippant isolated comments or systematic bullying. Irritation, resentment or annoyance from line managers was not uncommon;
2. ‘Banter’ – reportedly expressed to the mother and behind her back by line managers and colleagues. Although in legal terms the intention of a comment is irrelevant, mothers did not think their colleagues were being deliberately

offensive but felt the banter reflected their discomfort about pregnancy. However, the banter also made women feel insecure and led to a breakdown of trust;

3. Comments about slacking – mothers said these typically came from colleagues, and, in their eyes, were often due to their lack of awareness about agreed flexible working arrangements, or a sense of ‘them and us’ with full-time employees expressing irritation with a pregnant colleague ‘not pulling their weight’.

For some mothers the impact of these comments was minimal; however, others said the comments had contributed to poor health impacts or forcing them out of their job. However when reporting their experiences, mothers were unwilling to label it as outright ‘bullying’.

Where multiple negative comments were reportedly made by a line manager, generally from the mother’s perspective this was a continuation of an existing difficult relationship.

Mothers often reported that negative comments in the workplace made them feel bad and made them question their competency, leading them to feel bad about themselves.

### Case study: Example of reported bullying, sales/customer service in large office, earning £10,000–£19,999 a year, aged 30–34

*Sian* worked in a sales and customer service occupation for a large company in the Manufacturing sector, earning less than £20,000 a year. She claimed she had a poor experience throughout her pregnancy as she felt that her line manager didn’t believe that she had extra antenatal appointments and had reportedly asked other team members to check up on the hours she was working.

*‘When she got my colleagues on my customer care [section] to check my logging in time that hurt . . . she was highlighting the fact that, I did need more appointments . . . She’d make comments like, “You’ve had two lots of appointment this week. How’s your workload?” A friend of mine who she’d asked to keep an eye on the time said to her, “You do know it’s a legal thing that you have to let her go to these appointments. She doesn’t have to make the time up.” And she would say, “Well, she’s having lots of extra appointments.”’*

*Sian* was very anxious during her pregnancy but felt her manager provided no support and said she had made offensive comments to her colleagues.

*‘Sometimes she said: “She’s letting me down again. She’s going for another midwife appointment,” to the team... There were comments made when I wasn’t in the office, it was something that Monica [line manager] said that was a bit spiteful. My friend went up to her and asked, “Is Sian all right? Is she not in today?” and she said:*

*“She’s been to the doctors and she’s just getting too fat to get in to the car.” She just stood there and was [shocked].’*

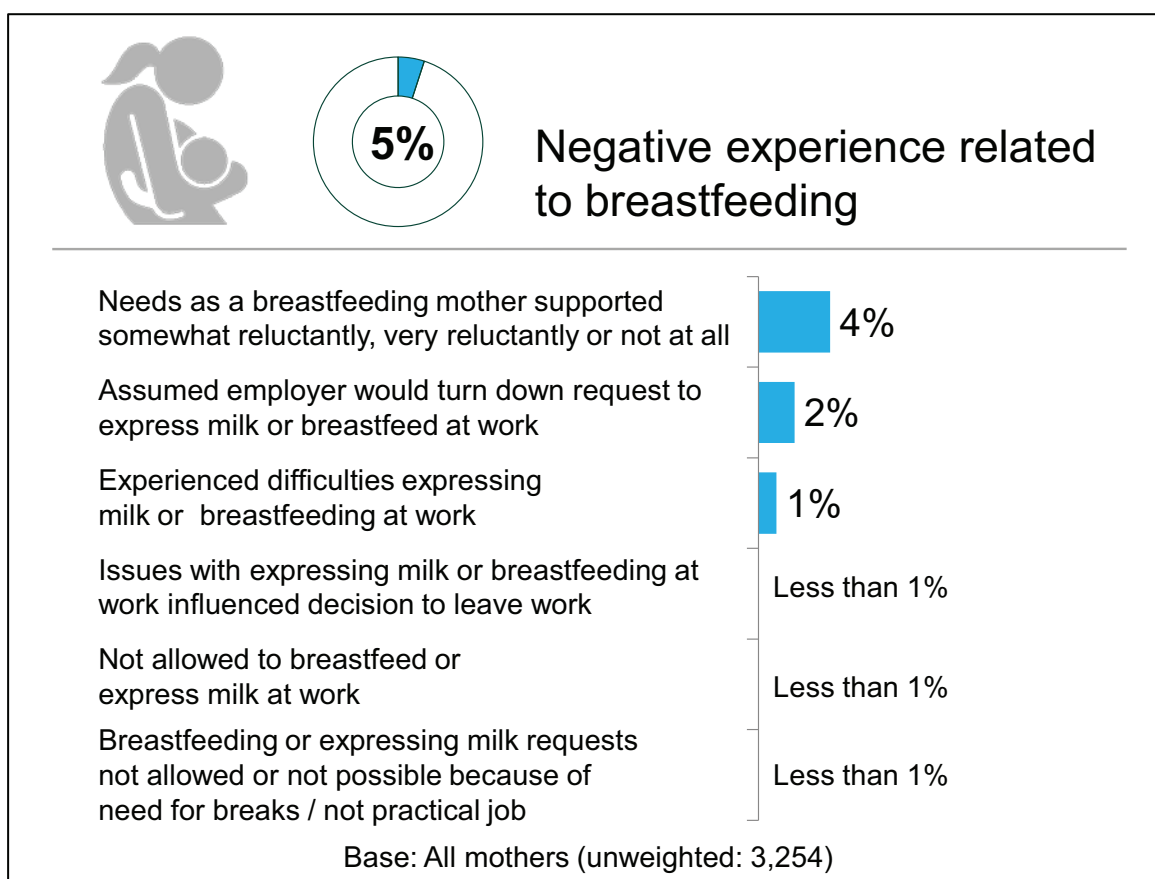
Sian reported that she tried to raise a formal complaint but said that she received little response.

### 3.7 Negative experience related to breastfeeding

One in 20 mothers reported a negative experience related to breastfeeding (Figure 3.6). This was largely driven by mothers feeling that their needs as a breastfeeding mother were supported somewhat reluctantly; very reluctantly; or not at all (4%).

1% of mothers tried to express milk or breastfeed at work but experienced difficulties with their employer.

**Figure 3. 6: Negative experience related to breastfeeding in detail**



Less than 1% of mothers said that issues with breastfeeding at work influenced their decision to leave work, if scaled up to the general population this could mean as many as 3,000 mothers per year. The same proportion said that that they were not allowed to breastfeed or express milk at work, and again less than 1% reported that

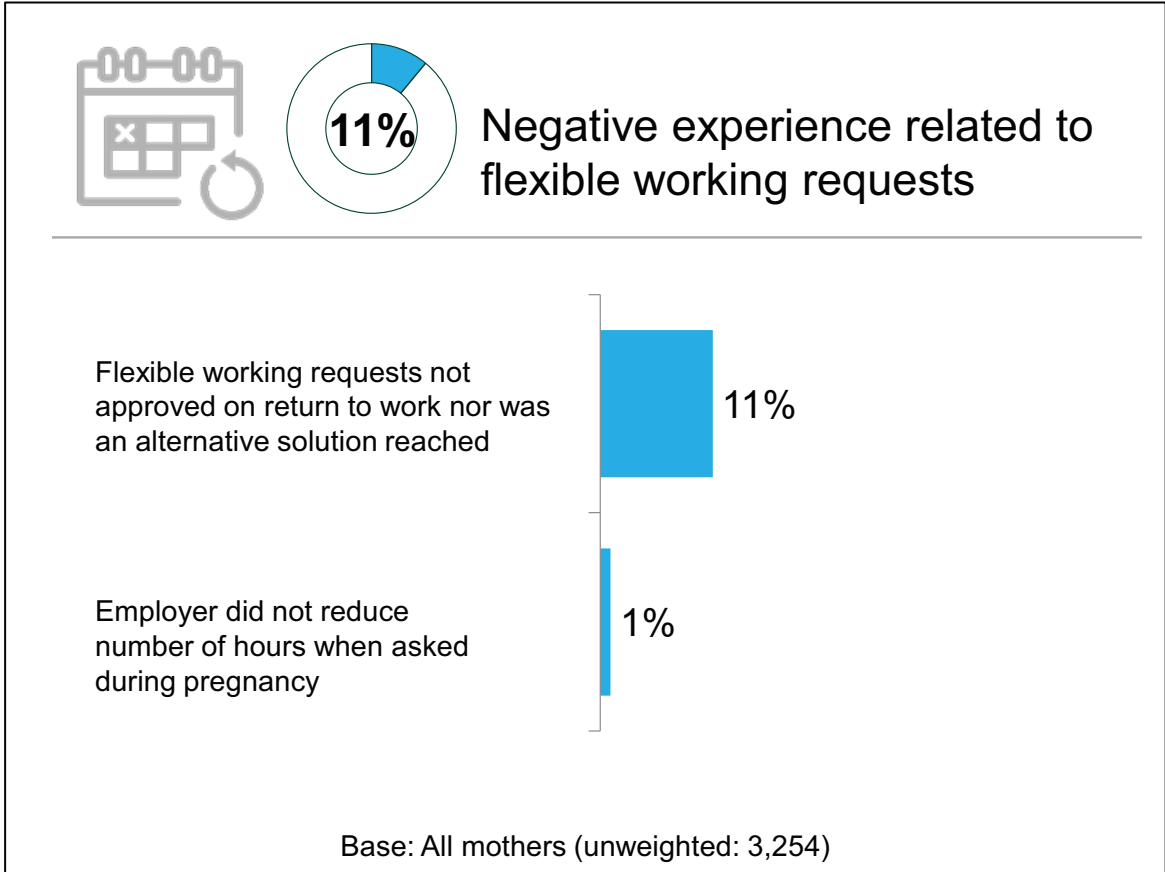
breastfeeding or expressing requests were either not allowed or not possible because of the nature of the job.

Assumed or actual difficulties related to expressing milk or breastfeeding at work are explored in more detail in Chapter 10.

### 3.8 Negative experience related to flexible working requests

One in nine mothers (11%) had a flexible working request declined without being offered an alternative solution that met their needs. 1% of mothers said they did not feel fully supported by their employer because they declined their request to reduce the number of hours they worked. These issues are discussed in more detail in Chapter 9.

**Figure 3. 7: Negative experience related to flexible working requests**



Mothers working in the Education sector (7%) and Professional occupations (9%) were less likely to report a negative experience related to a flexible working request compared to 11% on average. Industrial sector was found to be an important factor in determining experiences relating to flexible working: mothers working in Arts, culture and leisure, Agriculture, fishing and mining, Manufacturing, Utilities and Trade



sectors were one and a half to two times as likely as average to report a negative experience.

Some mothers said they found it difficult to reach agreement with their employer for fixed hours which they needed in order to arrange childcare.

*'They were trying to negotiate to get me to do more hours for a part-time position than I wanted to. I told them what I could do, and they said we want you to do more, it went back and forth for a bit and I said that's all I can do. After that they sent me a letter saying your contract will be 16 hours a week, and we can alter the shifts as we want, rather than the hours that I'd said I could manage. I called them at that point [and asked] what they meant by that, as I'd not have child care necessarily, and I need fixed hours, and they said we can't offer you that . . . I thought I'd offered hours that would suit the business, for times they are crying out for staff, so I thought I was being more than reasonable in offering those hours.'*

- Mother who claimed she was not offered fixed hours as she requested part-time working, insurance advisor at large firm, earning £10,000-£19,999 a year, aged 25-29

Other mothers felt they only had their requests partly met, which in many cases ultimately led to them leaving their employer as they found the hours unworkable.

*'It was just the late nights that I was struggling with . . . It was well we're open until eight o'clock at night so you've got to work till eight o'clock at night. And like some nights . . . they were open till like nine o'clock, ten o'clock . . . because if you're doing a treatment and you run over until like half eight, quarter to nine, you've got to stay . . . [They continued] booking treatments in for me that they know were going to run over . . . they still did it anyway'.*

- Mother who said that their request to work particular days was met, but not her request to finish earlier, beauty therapist, earning £5,000-£9,999 a year, aged 20-24

### 3.9 Other negative experience

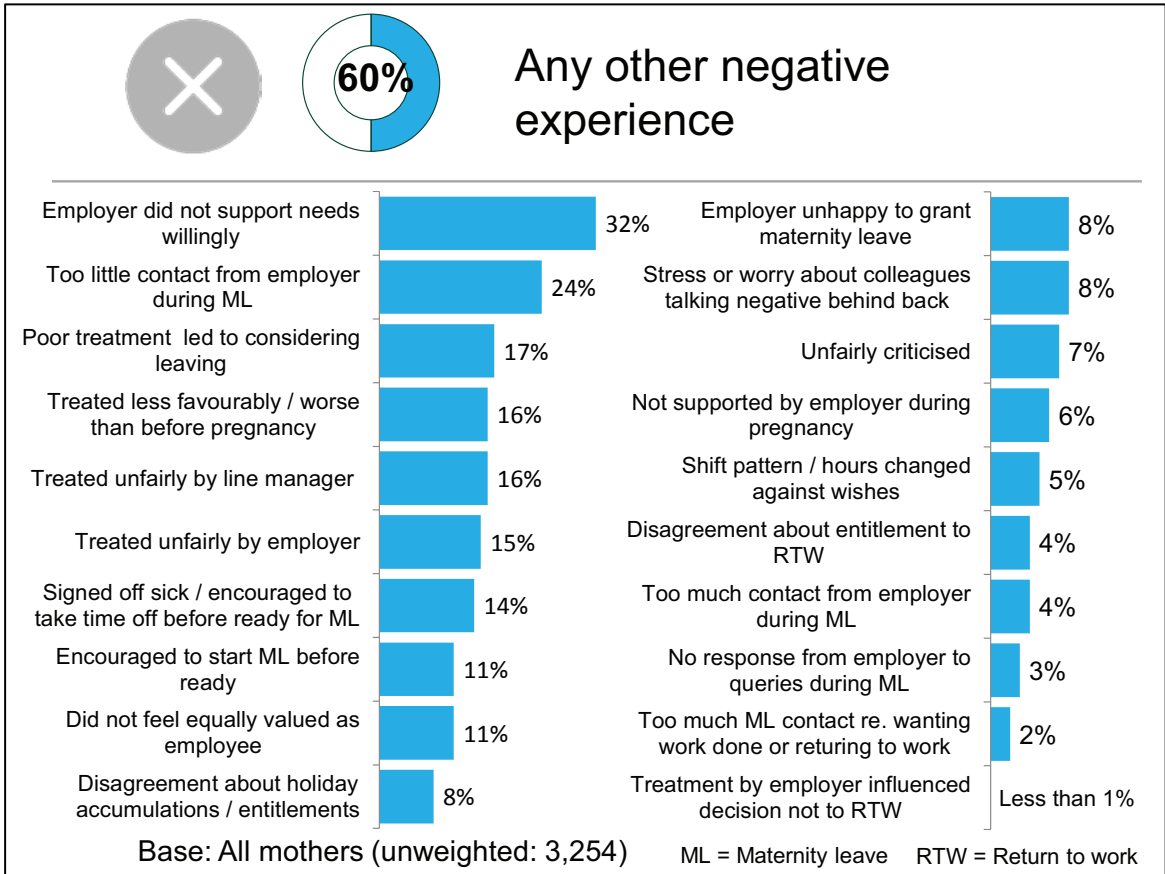
This category captures all other types of negative experience not already covered by the previous categories. The most common type of other negative experience was mothers feeling unsupported by their employer. About one third (32%) said that their employer did not support their needs willingly or supported them reluctantly either while they were pregnant or once they had returned to work. Chapter 4 explores employer support and the dynamic between line managers and HR in more detail.

Too little contact during maternity leave was also a common problem, cited by 24% of mothers. Communication on maternity leave is discussed in Chapter 6.

Figure 3.8 details the other types of negative treatment that make up this category, and shows that around one in seven mothers said they:

- experienced poor treatment that led them to consider leaving employer (17%);
- were treated less favourably / worse than before pregnancy (16%);
- were treated unfairly by their line manager (16%);
- were treated unfairly by their employer (15%);
- were signed off sick or encouraged to take time off before they were ready for maternity leave (14%).

**Figure 3. 8: Other negative treatment reported by respondents in detail**



About one in 10 mothers reported that they were encouraged to take time off before they were ready for maternity leave (11%) and that they did not feel equally valued as an employee compared to before being pregnant (11%).

In addition, one in 12 mothers faced disagreement about holiday accumulation or benefits that they were entitled to (8%), felt their employer was unhappy to grant maternity leave (8%), and experienced stress or worry about colleagues talking negatively behind their back (8%).

## 4. Employer support and line manager/HR dynamic

This chapter covers mothers' views on the support they received during pregnancy and on return from maternity leave. This includes: whether their employer supported their needs willingly, how they were treated by their line manager and the reaction of their employer when they first communicated their pregnancy. The follow-up interviews explored what 'support' actually means to mothers and how the dynamic between the employer and the line manager can affect perceptions of support.

### 4.1 Summary

The majority (91%) of mothers said that their employers were happy about letting them take maternity leave and 89% of mothers felt equally valued by their employer following announcement of their pregnancy, compared with before they told them they were pregnant.

Two thirds of mothers (66%) who returned to work after maternity leave felt their needs were willingly supported during pregnancy and on their return to work. However, a third of mothers reported that their needs as either a pregnant woman or the mother of a young baby were not supported willingly by their employer at some stage during their pregnancy and return to work. In addition:

The majority of flexible working requests during pregnancy were granted. However, almost three in ten mothers said they were not allowed flexibility in term of hours worked (29%); a lower share of mothers were not allowed to start earlier or finish later (24%); or receive additional breaks (28%) that they had requested during pregnancy.

- The majority of mothers (91%) reported that they were not treated with less respect by their line manager, however around one in 12 said they were treated with less respect by a line manager (8%); a further 11% of mothers did not feel equally valued by their employer more generally; and 8% of mothers felt their employer was not happy about them taking maternity leave.
- One in eight mothers reported feeling treated less favourably in some other way during their pregnancy (12%).
- A minority of mothers (7%) said they were put under pressure to hand in their notice when they told their employer they were pregnant.

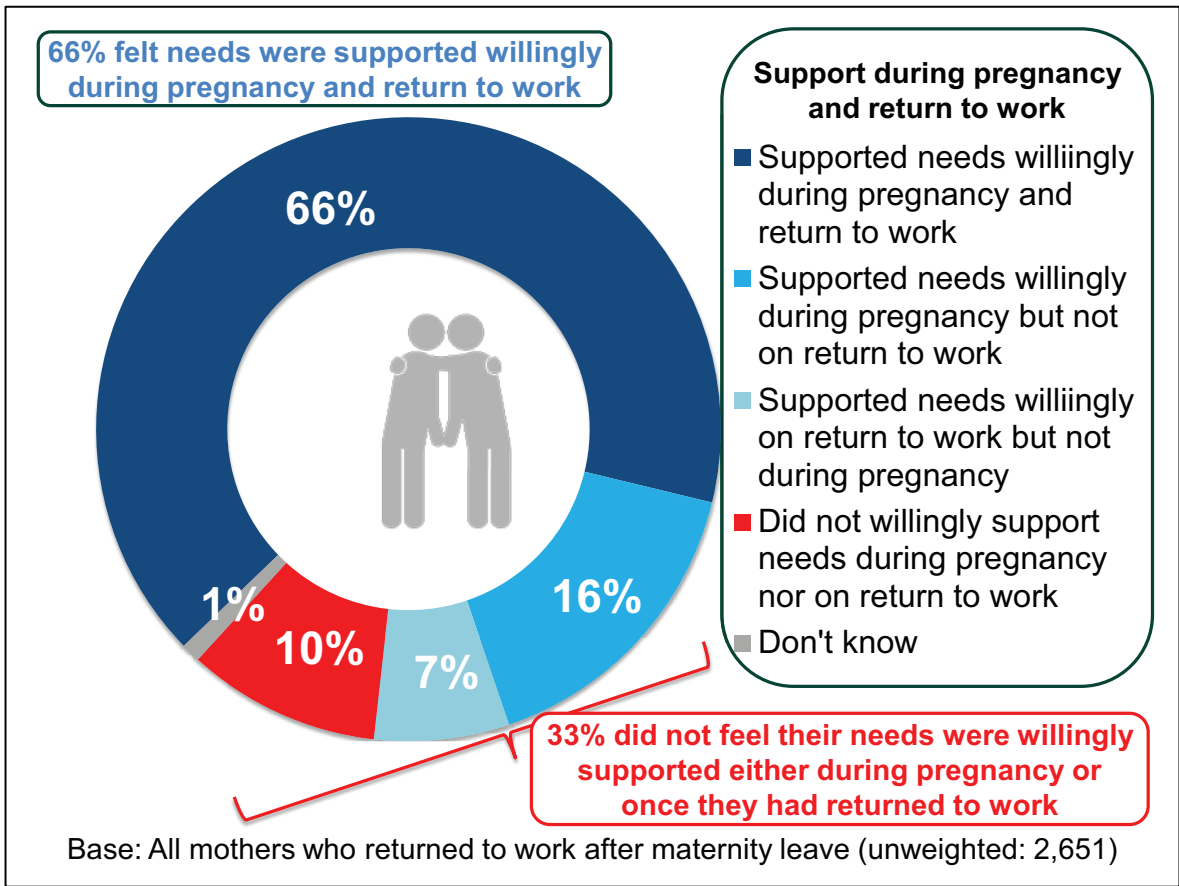
Many of these negative experiences were more commonly reported by pregnant women or new mothers working in Caring, leisure and other service occupations.

The follow-up interviews revealed that some mothers felt their employers supported them willingly but their expectations of support were set quite low. For example, for some mothers being supported meant receiving their statutory entitlements (such as being allowed to attend antenatal appointments in work time, receiving the correct pay; and having a job to return to even when these weren't automatically given by their employers, or when a mother had to negotiate for them). In this context, it appears mothers often considered support as being an absence of explicit or repeated negative treatment from employers.

### 4.2 Employer support during pregnancy and return from maternity leave

Two thirds of mothers who returned to work felt their employer supported them willingly both as a pregnant employee and as a new mother (Figure 4.1).

**Figure 4. 1: The extent to which mothers felt supported by their employers during pregnancy and return to work**



Mothers in Administrative and secretarial occupations (74%) and those who had worked for their employer for at least five years (70%) were among those most likely to have felt supported willingly by their employer at during pregnancy and on their return to work than average (66%).

Mothers' perceptions of what 'support' means are highly subjective. The follow-up interviews demonstrated that those who had the most positive experiences with their employers typically had employers with clear policies in place; managers who were fair and flexible; and felt valued as a result of their employer making reasonable adjustments to enable them to work effectively.

According to some of the qualitative interviews with mothers, employers regarded as supportive by some mothers were simply fulfilling their statutory obligations (for example, allowing mothers to attend appointments and covering maternity pay). Although mothers were especially positive if the attitude of managers and general culture of the workplace was supportive and positive about pregnancy, parenthood and work-life balance.

The following case study is based on the positive experience of a mother who felt supported throughout pregnancy; maternity leave; and on her return from maternity leave.

### Case study: Example of feeling well supported throughout, teacher at sixth form college, earning £30,000–£39,999 a year, aged 30–34

*Isabel* had taught in a sixth form college for five years when she became pregnant with her first child. She says she had a very positive experience. Her employer reportedly made adjustments such as allowing her to finish lessons slightly earlier to give her time to get to the next classroom and after seven months maternity leave she returned to the same employer on slightly reduced hours. She feels she continues to progress professionally and feels very loyal to her employer. She found that managers, colleagues and students were all supportive.

*'They saw me as a person, as more than just a professional and yet still professional. There was never any suggestion that I would be any less capable when I was pre having a baby, when I was pregnant or afterwards. . . I still love my work and I still have a joyful time at home with my little girl! And I feel very privileged in that because the majority of my female friends aren't in that position. It's because of the treatment, about the way I was treated and the way I've been encouraged professionally, since coming back, that it made motherhood and professional life balance perfectly together. . . . I never felt professional development wasn't open to me, I've since having had my child, had a promotion, despite them probably realising that I was going to have another [child] at some point, I've still been given a promotion. They've paid for a huge training opportunity for me this year, I have regular support as a new manager. I'm Head of Department now and they've supported me and stepped back and given me space to do my own thing. Just an excellent example!'*

For some, good support was seen as 'luck' and not as a standard expectation.

*'They know what they have to do to comply with HR, like the workstation checks. The other things, the niceties, were my colleagues and manager, and maybe those things I was lucky with.'*

- Mother who considers her support as luck, administrator in financial company, earning £5,000-£9,999 a year, aged 35-39

The follow-up interviews showed that it was common for some mothers to report they felt supported by their employer even though they also reported negative or possibly discriminatory experiences. This suggests that some mothers' expectations of support were often quite low. In-depth interviews indicated that some mothers considered their employers to be supportive if their employers allowed them to attend antenatal appointments in work time (even if this was allowed reluctantly and resulted in the mother feeling uncomfortable), paid them correctly and provided a job for them to return to after maternity leave.

Around one in six mothers (16%) felt they were willingly supported while pregnant, but not once they returned to work from maternity leave. One in 10 mothers returning to work from maternity leave felt neither their needs as a pregnant woman nor as a mother of a young baby were supported willingly by their employer. This was more likely to be mothers who were single (19%), under 25 years old (17%) and working in workplaces with fewer than 10 employees (14%). This is consistent with the employer survey findings that smaller workplaces were less likely to agree that it is in their interests to support pregnant women or those on maternity leave.

Overall, a third of mothers felt that their needs were not supported willingly either during their pregnancy or on their return from maternity leave.

The following case studies reflect the type of experiences reported by mothers who identified their employer as unsupportive. It demonstrates that multiple or explicitly negative or possibly discriminatory experiences were required for mothers to consider their employer unsupportive.

### Case study: Example of a mother not feeling adequately supported during to pregnancy related sickness, supermarket customer assistant, earning £5,000–£9,999 a year, aged 20–24

*Lara* was hospitalised several times and had to take time off work for pregnancy-related illness. She felt her employer was not understanding of her needs and reportedly told her to return to the shop floor after being sick.

*'I would get told off for being out the back being sick when I should be on the till serving and it was like, what am I meant to do?'*

She felt she was not trusted and said she had to provide evidence from her midwife that her antenatal appointments had to be on particular days (when the midwife worked).

*'I had to take letters in from the midwife to say she only works certain days. They thought I was only doing it to be difficult whereas it was beyond my control. ACAS told me that I have every right to leave for midwife appointments and they can't stop it.'*

Later in her pregnancy, *Lara* developed sciatica and requested a chair so she could continue working at the till. *Lara* reported that she was not provided with one and felt that she had to start maternity leave early although she felt she could have continued working if her employer had provided her with a chair.

After returning from maternity leave *Lara* said her employer took disciplinary action against her for not providing sufficient notice she was going to hospital with her child on an emergency visit, and because her husband contacted them on her behalf. She felt that her employer was being inflexible; unwilling to consider her requests for hours which would fit around nursery; and lacked understanding when her young baby was ill.

*...they would call me in for meetings because my attendance was rubbish... They told me to drop Thursdays because George always seemed to be ill on a Thursday... at one point told me, "If you don't want to be here then you know where the door is."*

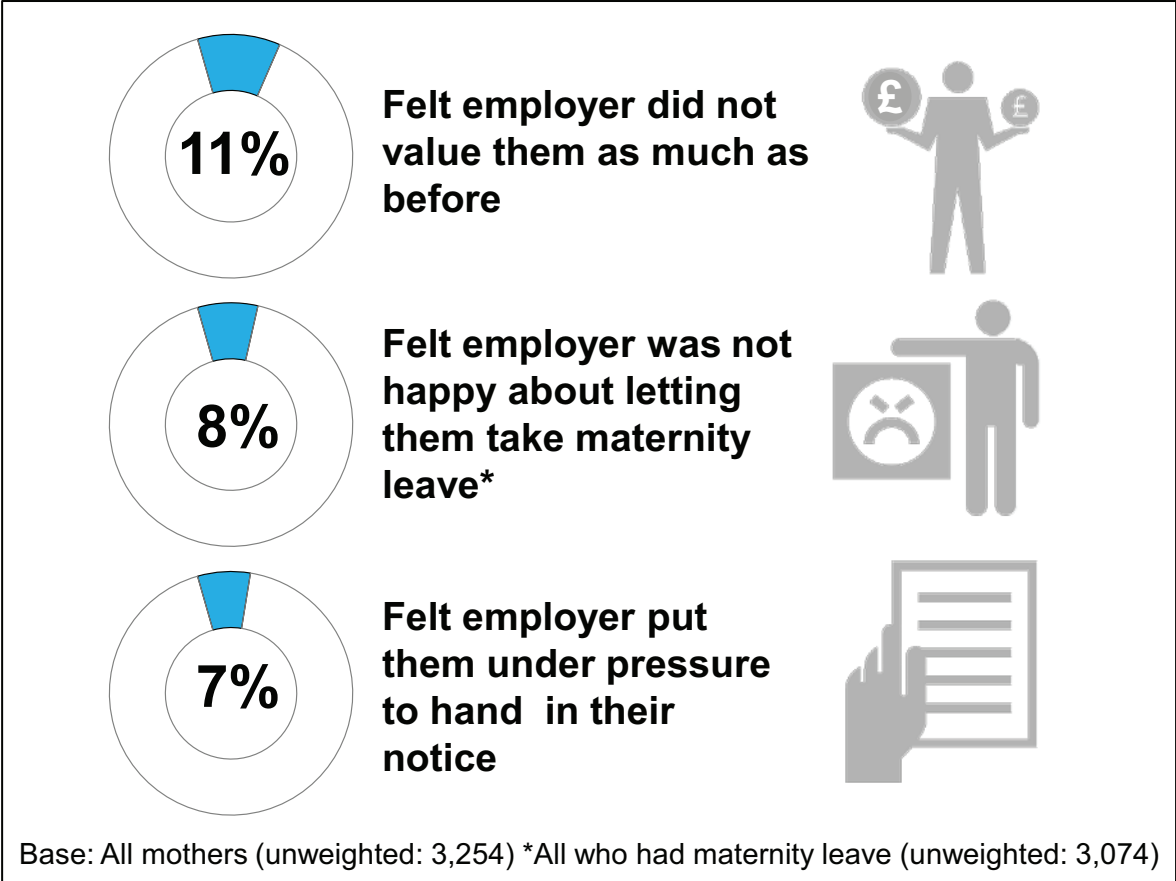
### 4.3 Communicating pregnancy to the employer

The majority (91%) of mothers said that their employers were happy about letting them take maternity leave. Overall, nine in ten women (89%) felt equally valued as an employee after telling their employer they were pregnant.

However, one in 12 (8%) said their employer was not happy about letting them take maternity leave and 7% felt under pressure to hand in their notice (Figure 4.2).



**Figure 4. 2: Unfavourable treatment following the communication of their pregnancy**



Mothers most likely to report that they felt under pressure to hand in their notice included respondents under 25 years old (15%), who were single mothers (14%), those working in Caring, leisure and other service occupations (14%), and mothers earning less than £10,000 a year (13%) compared to the average (7%).

Mothers who reported feeling their employer was unhappy about them taking maternity leave were most likely also to:

- be on an agency or casual contract (22%);
- be a single mother (19%);
- have been with the employer for less than one year (17%); and
- have a long-term physical or mental health condition (15%) compared to the average (8%).

Other mothers that felt less valued by their employer than they did before telling their employer they were pregnant were most likely to be on an agency or casual contract (18%), work in the Transport and Communications sector (16%), and be under 25 years old (15%).

In the follow-up interviews some mothers reported initial negative reactions including unprofessional behaviour, bullying and abuse. Mothers felt that while some employers seemed driven by financial concerns, other negative reactions seemed more personal.

*'[When I told them I was pregnant] the manager started going off her head saying nobody else was to fall pregnant and she couldn't afford to lose staff...'*

- Mother who claimed she was treated badly in a number of ways including being told to leave, trainee hairdresser, earning £5,000-£9,999 a year, aged 20-24

Some mothers felt that the news of their pregnancy led to a marked change in behaviour from their manager, as outlined in the following case study.

### Case study: Example of a reported marked change in treatment once pregnancy announced, public relations director for large hospitality organisation, earning £100,000 or more a year, aged 35–39

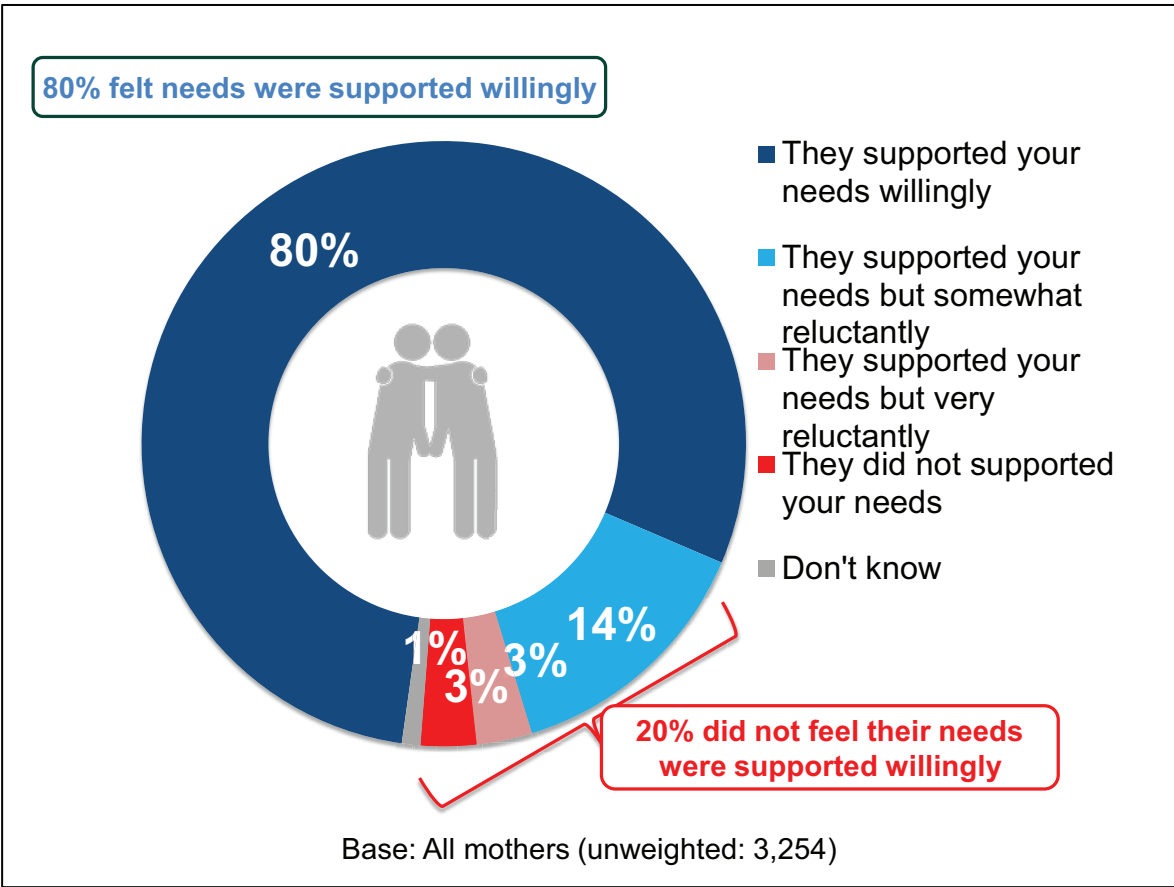
*Louise*, who worked in a senior PR role, described how her good relationships with managers rapidly deteriorated once she announced her pregnancy. She said she received what she believes was an unwarranted poor review, and was subject to verbal bullying to the point where she sought legal advice. She was shocked at the poor treatment she received and believes they wished her to not return from maternity leave.

*'I joined in November and was loving it, the role was there for me to build. I was getting good results and working really well with the wider team. . . I fell unexpectedly pregnant in the March/April, it's obviously not something you would plan in a new role. Pretty much on the day I told them, the relationship just fell apart. My female boss is a very feisty character. She was on the phone to me bawling me out for something, very unreasonably, really aggressive – she had never talked like that to me before. From that point the relationship deteriorated to the point that even though I was getting successes, good media coverage, thanks and praise, and spot bonuses from people around the business for the work I was doing, my bosses insisted I was doing a terrible job. And they managed to orchestrate a most appalling review for me. I would call it bullying in this context: they were trying to get me to the point where I'd go have the baby and not come back. I had really good reviews before.'*

### 4.4 Extent to which employers supported mothers needs while pregnant

Four in five mothers reported that their employer supported their needs as a pregnant employee willingly (as shown in Figure 4.3).

**Figure 4. 3: The extent to which employer supported mothers’ needs as someone who was working while pregnant**



Mothers who said their employer willingly supported their needs as a pregnant employee were particularly likely (compared with the average of 80%) to be aged 40 years or older (89%), to be working in a large establishment (85%), earning over £30,000 a year (84%), employed in Administrative and secretarial occupations (87%); Associate professional and technical (84%) or Professional (83%) occupations, and working in the Public administration sector (86%).

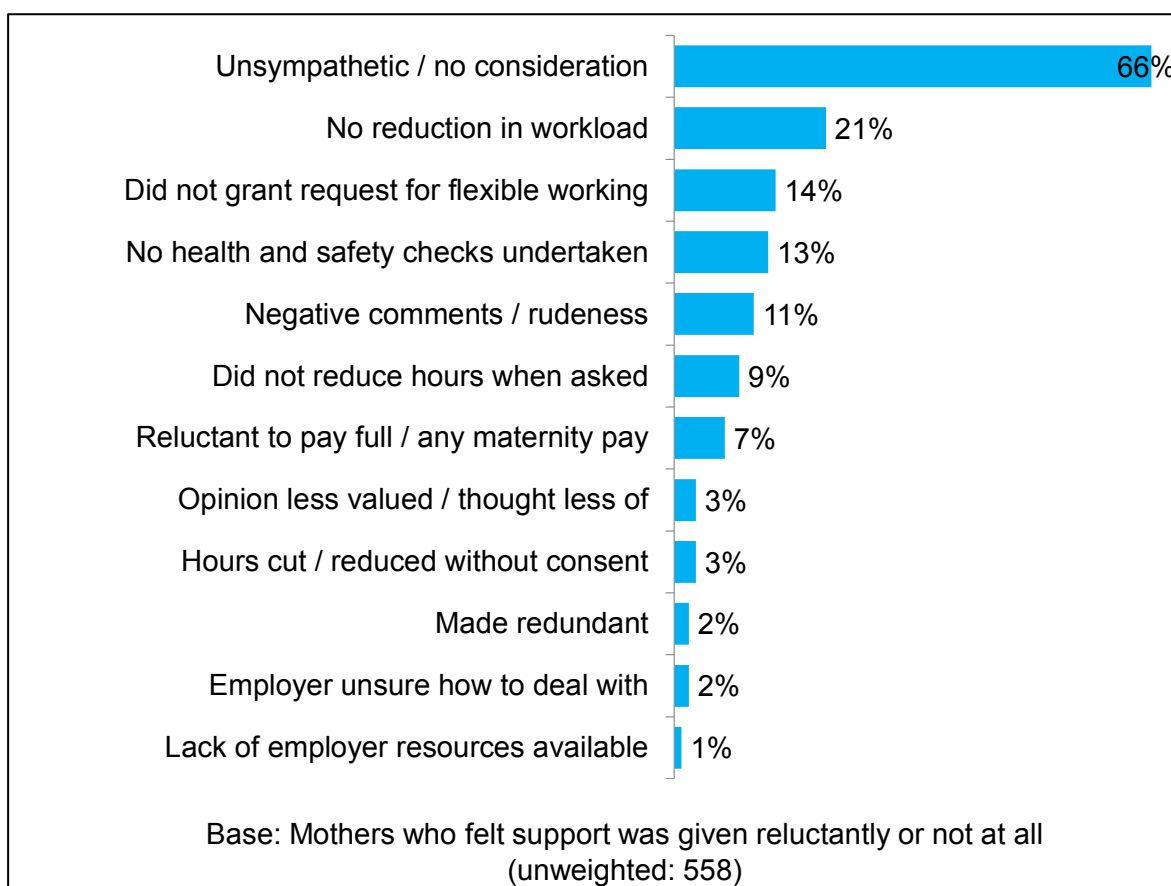
By comparison, those who said their employer did not willingly support their needs as a pregnant employee were more likely than average (20%) to be:

- single mothers (34%);

- working in Skilled trades (38%), Caring, leisure or other service (33%) or Sales and customer service (28%) occupations;
- working in the Trade (27%) or Arts, Culture and Leisure (36%) sectors;
- aged under 25 (31%); and
- earning less than £10,000 a year (25%).

Where mothers said their employer did not support their needs willingly during pregnancy (Figure 4.4) the main reason was that they felt their employer was unsympathetic and/or gave no consideration to their pregnancy (66%). This was followed by no reduction in workload (21%); not granting requests for flexible working (14%); or no checks on health and safety (13%).

**Figure 4. 4: Why mothers felt their needs as a pregnant employee were not willingly supported by their employer**



Around one in 14 mothers (7%) felt unsupported because of their employer's reluctance to pay all or any of the maternity pay they were entitled to. This was more common among those earning less than £10,000 a year (15%).

The follow-up interviews identified a key theme in that many mothers returning to work for the same employer after maternity leave felt that they were well supported in pregnancy. Mothers who found their employer accommodating with appointments, illness and childcare during pregnancy said they felt more confident about being able to deal with childcare issues on their return from maternity leave.

*'I had a few complications during my pregnancies, so I had to go to hospital sometimes three times a week. They were very happy with me doing that, very accommodating. I did try to do it so it didn't affect my work but my [manager] said, "If that's what you've got to do, then go to the hospital." They were really supportive like that.'*

- Mother who is planning to return to work for a third time, police constable, earning £30,000-£39,999 a year, aged 30-34

Women who had not been with an employer long before they announced their pregnancy were often especially nervous of the reaction they might receive. When they received assurance that they were appreciated as an employee during pregnancy and maternity leave, they felt valued, more positive about returning to work after maternity leave and loyal to the employer.

*'Because of not having been at the organisation long I was conscious of it being soon and for me the support was the reassurance that I was still involved in all elements of the team strategy and planning. It never felt like they thought I might not come back. I wanted to return and pick up where I left off. I was reassured that I was a member of the team and they were more than satisfied with my progress in the time I was there.'*

- Mother who became pregnant six weeks after starting her new job and returned full-time, manager at a large company, earning £40,000-£49,999 a year, aged 30-34

Some women reported feeling that their employer took their needs seriously where they had received an individual risk assessment after announcing their pregnancy, and where physical needs, such as providing chairs, were met. Those who experienced this generally found their needs on returning to work were also met.

For some mothers these examples of support during pregnancy proved to them that their employer had a 'family-friendly' attitude as a whole and/or that their line manager was supportive. Both factors were important for mothers deciding whether to return, and stay, with their employer while also juggling a young family. Most who were well supported had decided to return to their employer before they went on maternity leave (though they had not usually told their employer at this stage).

Some mothers, even if not happy with their actual job role, chose to sacrifice this for the benefit of a supportive employer or manager. Qualitative evidence suggests that some employers, therefore, benefitted from over-qualified employees staying in more junior roles.

#### 4.5 Mothers' treatment by line managers during pregnancy

Most mothers reported positive treatment by line managers following communication of their pregnancy (Figure 4.5), including; not feeling treated with less respect after they told them they were pregnant (91%) and not feeling treated less favourably in some other way (88%).

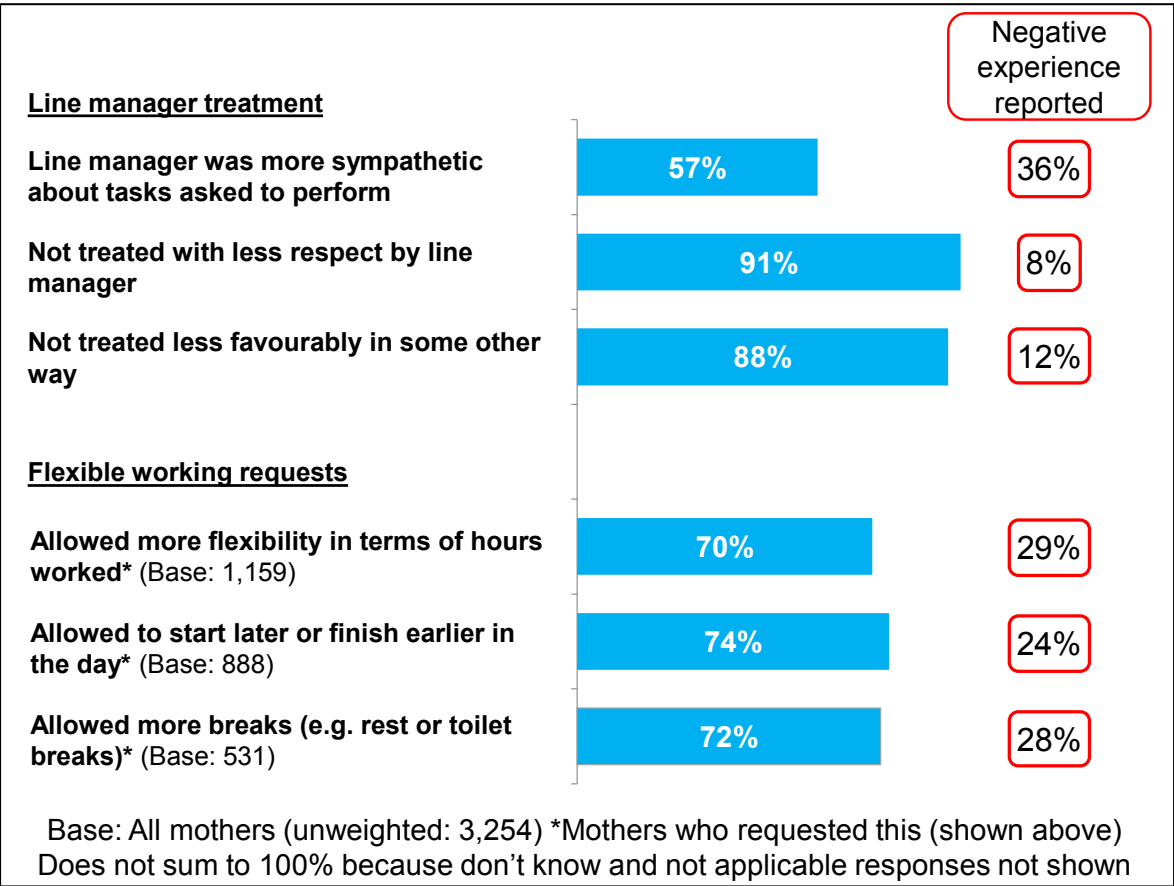
*'Whenever I said that I was tired or needed a rest, they'd take that into consideration straightaway and let me have a break.'*

- Mother whose line manager facilitated extra breaks, catering assistant for fast food chain, earning £10,000-£19,999, aged 20-24

The majority of flexible working requests during pregnancy were granted. However, around three in 10 mothers said that during pregnancy they were not granted their request for more flexibility in the hours they worked (29%), more breaks, for example, rest or toilet breaks (28%), and to start later or finish earlier in the day (24%). Those working in Education were more likely to say they had an issue with lack of flexibility. Around half of those who requested flexibility in terms of hours worked were not allowed this (54%); around two in five (38%) were not allowed different start or finish times.

Just over one third of mothers (36%) reported that their line manager was not more sympathetic about the tasks they were asked to perform.

**Figure 4. 5: Line manager treatment of mothers during pregnancy**



One in 12 mothers (8%) said they were treated with less respect by their line manager as a result of their pregnancy.

This was most likely to be experienced by mothers:

- on an agency, casual or zero-hours contract (15%)
- with a long-term physical or mental health condition (14%)
- in Skilled trades (21%) and Caring, leisure and other service (12%) occupations
- in Manufacturing (11%) or Trade (9%); compared with 5% in Education and 3% in Utilities who were the least likely to experience this, and
- in the private sector (9%); compared to 6% in the public sector.

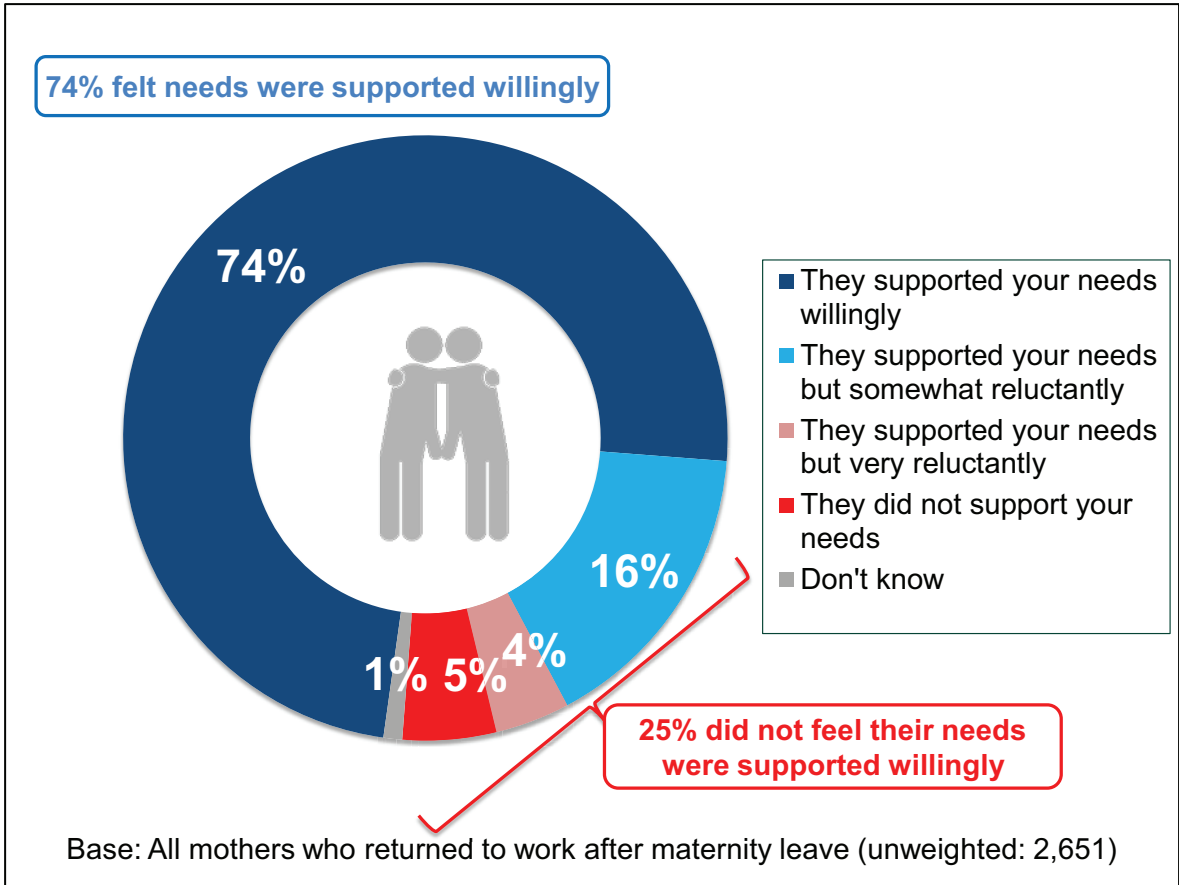
One in eight mothers (12%) said they were treated less favourably in some other way; these mothers were most likely to be earning more than £60,000 a year (19%), and working in Finance (16%); or Transport and Communication (16%) sectors; compared with 9% in the Education sector who were least likely to experience this.

### 4.6 Extent to which employer supported mothers needs on returning to work

Where mothers returned to work after maternity leave, three in four (74%) felt their employer willingly supported their needs as a mother caring for a young baby. This was lower than the proportion who felt their needs were willingly supported in pregnancy (80%). One in four mothers felt their needs on return from maternity leave were supported reluctantly or not at all (Figure 4.6).

Mothers more likely to report that their needs were not willingly supported when they returned to work were those earning over £60,000 a year (36%), and single mothers (38%).

**Figure 4. 6: Whether employer supported mothers’ needs as a worker with a young baby to look after**



Earlier in this chapter, it was reported that the lowest earners (earning less than £10,000 a year) were the most likely to feel unsupported during pregnancy. In



contrast, the highest earning mothers (earning over £60,000 a year) were most likely to feel that their needs were not supported willingly on their return from maternity leave.

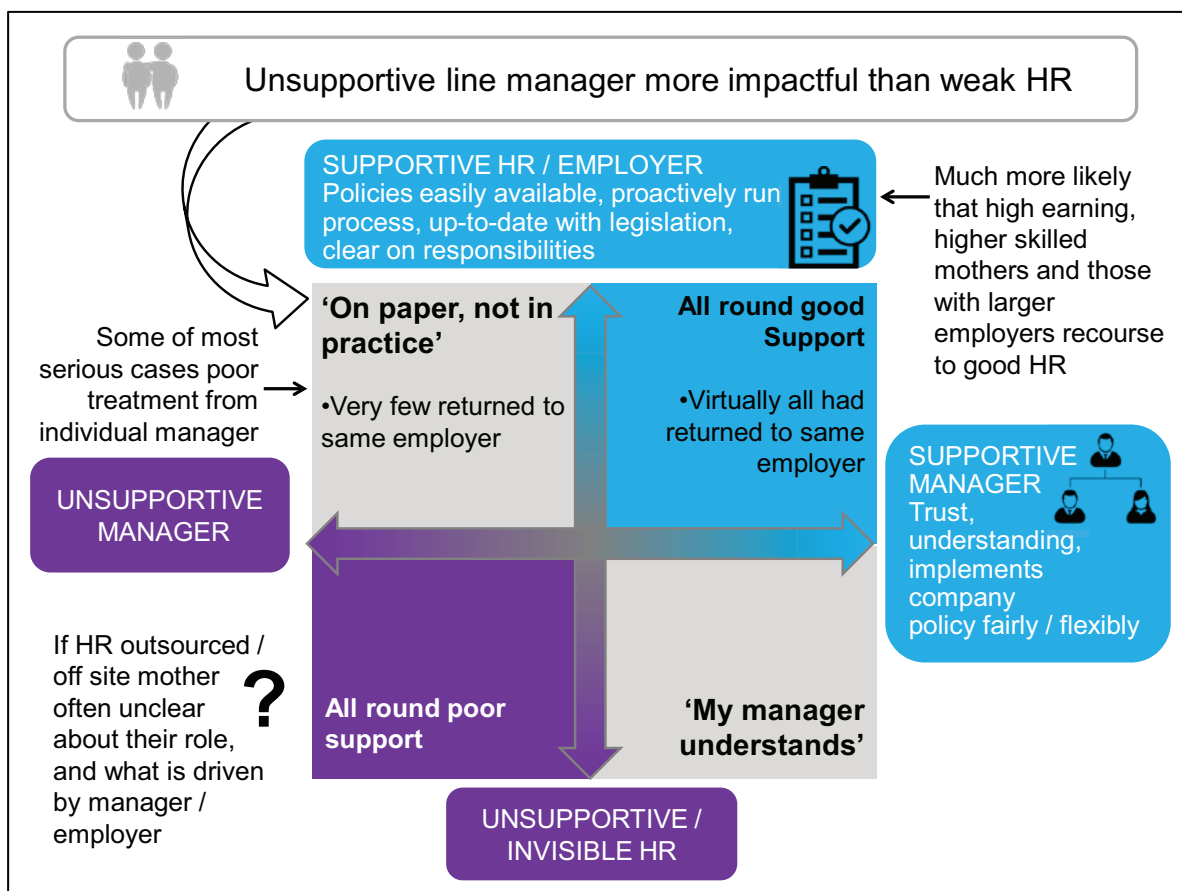
*'My line manager very much expected me to get on with the job – pregnant or not, childcare issues or not. I was treated like everyone else, but nobody else had a young child at home. I was doing heavy cases and working later hours. I don't think she understood the pressure I was under.'*

- Mother reportedly expected to work long hours on return, social worker, earning £30,000-£39,999 a year, aged 30-34

#### 4.7 Line manager and HR dynamic

Mothers' responses to the survey raised some questions about the dynamic between the line manager and HR, and whether the line manager or HR had more impact on mothers' experiences. The follow-up interviews explored this dynamic and found that an unsupportive line manager had more impact than an unsupportive HR department or employer.

**Figure 4. 7: Dynamic of HR/employer and line manager support**



This section describes the experiences in relation to each quadrant in Figure 4.7.

### Supportive HR/employer and supportive manager see top right hand quadrant of Figure 4.7

A supportive HR or employer was characterised by policies that were easily available; a proactively run process; up-to-date with legislation; and clear on responsibilities. A supportive line manager was typically characterised by trust; understanding; and seen to be implementing the company policy fairly and flexibly.

Where both were present, virtually all employees had returned to the same employer.

### Supportive HR/employer but unsupportive manager see top left hand quadrant of Figure 4.7

The follow-up interviews identified a group of mothers who found the company HR processes and policies fine but not well implemented by their line managers. This group includes those with a high prevalence of negative or possibly discriminatory experiences. Some mothers in this group said individual managers were responsible for not providing 'in practice' the type of support offered 'on paper' by the employer. Very few who said they had unsupportive managers during pregnancy were willing to consider returning to their employer after maternity leave – they felt that interpretation of HR policy was left to individual managers resulting in inconsistent application.

*'If they'd been more supportive I would have worked more, the pressure they were putting me under was making me sick, when you're diabetic blood sugar is affected by stress and she was pushing me to do all these things and I said I couldn't do them. . . HR and occupational health were involved and would say things like I wasn't to travel, getting up early and flying is potentially stressful, will affect the blood sugar and therefore the baby potentially. But my manager was still saying, like, "Could you not drive to Newcastle?" And push me, like to drive to Manchester. She missed the point that it was the change that was stressful.'*

- Mother who had diabetes during pregnancy and felt that this was made worse by perceived stress caused by line manager, account manager, earning £30,000-£39,999 a year, aged 30-34

### Supportive manager but unsupportive HR/employer (see bottom right quadrant of Figure 4.7)

Other mothers found their employers' HR policies to be unsupportive, but benefited from understanding and/or supportive managers. Those in this group were more likely to still consider they were reasonably well supported and were happy to consider returning after maternity leave, indicating the value placed on direct working relationships.

*'Some managers interpret [employer's] policies in different ways. For instance, it may say that you have two days to repair your childcare but in reality if you have to get a new childminder it will take you longer and some managers may decide that after the two days you have to be back at work or there will be consequences. My manager would know how staff approach work and support them. My complaint about [the employer] as a whole is about the interpretation of policy; they should be black and white, though I benefit from having an old fashioned manager who knows staff. '*

- Mother who found HR policies too vague but had a good manager, administrator in finance company, earning £5,000-£9,999 a year, aged 35-39

### Unsupportive manager, unsupportive/invisible HR (see bottom left hand quadrant Figure 4.7)

Some mothers were unclear what the role of HR was (especially among those where HR was off-site or outsourced) and saw the line manager as the only avenue for support. Where the mother saw their manager as unsupportive, this led to all round poor support. A number of mothers in this quadrant did not return to their employer.

*'You were always scared to go up to her [my line manager] and say I feel ill or need to go doctors is that okay because you feel that would be prejudiced against you . . . She wouldn't be a supportive person but the bad cop . . . I didn't see a company within [shop] I just saw it as she is the company and her word was the last word.'*

- Mother who says she had an unsupportive manager and was unclear about the role of central HR, retail sales consultant, earning £10,000-£19,999 a year, aged 20-24

Mothers who had experience with more than one employer during pregnancy, maternity leave and returning to work from maternity leave were able to compare how similar HR policies were implemented differently, as in the case of *Reema* below.

### Case study: Example where experiences between two employers with similar HR policies but not practices can be compared, senior manager at international bank, earning £90,000–£99,999 a year, aged 30–34

*Reema* has had three children. Her experience of support during pregnancy and return to work was far more positive with her second child at [bank] than her first negative experience with [consultancy]. At both companies she was a highly skilled, very highly paid employee. She found that although both companies had similar HR policies on paper, how they were put into practice by managers varied enormously and from *Reema's* point of view it was hard to tell whether poor support was due to specific individuals or the organisation's culture.

*'If you read all the literature and stuff you get sent by HR, it's all broadly very similar . . . I suppose the message you get from 'on high' is very much, "yes, we support working mothers, we're trying to encourage flexible working, we'll do what we can to accommodate your needs during pregnancy" . . . It's how they get translated through middle management as to whether they filter through . . . That works in [bank] where I am now but it didn't so much at [consultancy]. But then again it could just be those particular people being difficult and if I'd been in a different team it could've been a completely different story . . . you just never know if it's your small team or if it's department wide or if it's a firm wide attitude...I get a sense that there's more willingness for it to work where I am than there was at the old place. Even though, they've got the same rules and literature surrounding them....'*

## 5. Health and safety risk management

This chapter covers the assessment and management of risks, examining the extent to which:

- Employers conduct risk assessments and identify risks and hazards for pregnant women and mothers returning to work after maternity leave.
- Discussions about risks take place between employers and pregnant women and mothers returning to work after maternity leave.
- Risks are managed.

A risk assessment involves an employer thinking about what might cause harm to employees and deciding whether they are taking reasonable steps to prevent that harm. An employer is legally required to carry out a general risk assessment, although employers with fewer than five employees do not need a written record of doing so. Employers are not legally required to conduct a specific risk assessment once an employee informs them they are pregnant. However, as part of the process of carrying out a general risk assessment for their employees, employers should consider employees of childbearing age, including pregnant women and new mothers, assessing risks that may arise from any process or working condition.

If an employer identifies a significant health and safety risk which goes beyond the normal level of risk found outside the workplace for an employee who is pregnant or a new mother, an employer must temporarily adjust the employees working conditions and/or hours, or if that is not possible offer the employee suitable alternative work (at the same rate of pay). If that is not possible, the employee must be suspended from their work on paid leave for as long as necessary to protect the health and safety of the mother and baby.

### 5.1 Summary

Three in five mothers (62%) reported that their employer initiated a discussion about potential risks arising from their pregnancy. Where the employer initiated a discussion about potential risks, four in five mothers (79%) said their employer made them aware of actual risks to them or their baby (half of mothers (49%) overall).

One in five mothers (19%) said they identified risks their employer did not. Most mothers who had been made aware of risks by their employer felt all risks were tackled (77%), but one in five (19%) felt that some but not all were dealt with and a small proportion (2%) felt none were dealt with.

Risks identified by the mother and raised with the employer were less likely to have been tackled: just over three in five mothers (62%) felt these risks were not fully

tackled. Overall almost half of mothers (48%) said either their employer did not initiate a discussion about risks or that not all the risks identified were tackled.

Where mothers said risks were not fully resolved, it was most common for mothers to continue working in the same job role (72%). However, almost two in five mothers (38%) said it led to them starting maternity leave earlier than they wanted, and more than a quarter taking sick leave (28%).

One in five of these mothers (22%) said they left their employer as a result of these risks not being resolved – equivalent to 4% of all mothers. Young mothers (10%) aged under 25 were more likely than average (4%) to leave their employers as a result of risks not being resolved.

The likelihood of a mother leaving their employer as a result of risks not being resolved decreased the longer they had been working for their employer. 12% of those that had worked for their employer for less than a year and 9% of those that had been with their employer for one to two years reported leaving their job because of risks not being resolved.

Mothers who left their employers as a result of risks not being resolved were also more likely than average (4%) to:

- work in Skilled trades occupations (11%)
- be a single parent (11% compared to 3% married/living with partner)
- have a long-term physical or mental health condition (9% compared to 4% without)
- be on an agency/casual or zero-hours contract (9% compared to 4% on a permanent contract)
- work in the Hotels and Restaurants (8%) or Health and Social Work (6%) sectors
- work part-time (6% compared to 3% full-time)
- earn less than £30,000 (5% compared to 1% earning £30,000 or more).

Some of the evidence from the follow-up interviews showed that mothers sometimes felt their employer's approach to identifying and managing risks during pregnancy had only been 'tick-box' to comply with company procedures; that risks had not been dealt with properly; and that those conducting the risk assessments were not really interested in their welfare. Other mothers felt that their employers conducted risk assessments thoroughly and identified and dealt with risks. However, where managers failed to explain risks to a mother's immediate colleagues, they sometimes developed negative attitudes about the mother's commitment if she no longer undertook particular duties.

## 5.2 Discussions between mothers and employers about potential risks

Three in five mothers (62%) reported that their employer initiated a discussion with them about the potential risks to them or their baby in relation to their pregnancy. These employer-initiated discussions on risks were less likely to be reported by mothers on agency, casual or zero-hours contracts (46%), aged 35–39 (54%), earning £30,000 a year or more (54%), working in small workplaces of less than 10 employees (56%; this compares with 65% among those where 250 or more people were employed). Mothers working in Arts, Culture and Leisure (48%); Finance (51%); Transport and Communication (52%); Real Estate and Business (54%); or Education (56%) sectors were also less likely to report employer-initiated discussions on potential risks.

Where the employer initiated a discussion about potential risks, four in five mothers (79%) said their employer made them aware of actual risks to them or their baby. Overall, around half of mothers (49%) were informed by their employer of risks to them or their baby.

In comparison, the employers' survey found that over two in five of all employers who had conducted general risk assessments (41%) had identified risks to pregnant women and mothers returning from maternity leave. Overall, two thirds of employers who had conducted general risk assessments and had a pregnant employee or mother returning from maternity leave in the last three years had identified risks for these employees.

Some mothers said they had positive experiences in relation to assessment and management of risks, with employers reportedly initiating discussions, involving mothers in the identification of risks, and implementing suitable changes in a supportive way.

*'Because it was home care we use a lot of equipment, hoists and stuff like that...[the employer] does a risk assessment, but I have to risk assess myself as well...if it was a problem I'd just contact my boss and they were really good, they would help me out and we'll find a solution.'*

- Mother who said she had a positive risk management experience, specialist home care worker, earning £10,000-£19,999 a year, aged 30-34

However, some mothers reported that their employers conducted a specific risk assessment after they had told their employer they were pregnant and then felt that this was used as justification for reducing or removing certain responsibilities from the mother's role, without their agreement. Where it was claimed that employers did not discuss workplace risks or conduct a specific risk assessment after a mother had told her employer she was pregnant, this sometimes resulted in mothers feeling that they had to undertake inappropriate duties (for example, lifting) and in some instances they felt at risk in some situations.

*'There was no risk assessment done or anything like that. I was still required to move things that I probably shouldn't have moved or lifted or whatever. I just kind of got on with it. I know I was stupid...I was sent to another store to help out to run that store because one of the managers was off. I actually ended up doing too much [lifting] and ended up having a trip to the hospital because I really thought something was wrong.'*

- Mother who said she had no risk assessment, retail supervisor, earning £10,000-£19,999 a year, aged 20-24

### 5.3 Risks identified by mothers

One in five mothers (19%) said they identified risks to themselves or their baby not identified by their employer. Mothers were more likely to identify risks not raised by their employer if they worked in Education (24%); Health and Social Work (24%); or in medium sized workplaces (26%). More than one in four mothers (26%) with a long-term physical or mental health condition identified risks their employer had not.

The majority of mothers who identified risks themselves raised these with their employer (86%). Mothers in Associate professional and technical occupations (95%) were more likely than other mothers identifying risks to raise these with their employer, whereas those in Professional occupations (77%) or working in the Education sector (74%) were less likely.

Some mothers interviewed had reported health and safety concerns to their employer and asked for a risk assessment to be conducted, but were reportedly ignored by their employer; resulting in negative experiences and impacting on their health.

*'[At my previous employer] I had to keep asking for a risk assessment, they wouldn't risk assess me. I wasn't quite sure about all the chemicals that I was using, how the cleaning products would affect me and also the big linen bags with the dirty things I was dragging, and there was no help there with the heavy stuff and pulling out the beds and Hoovering under the beds. In the end, I had to have a month off because my sciatica, my back and then even when I was on the sick a receptionist rang me up and said can you come in and watch reception while I clean the rooms.'*

- Mother describing that she did not have a risk assessment during previous pregnancy with old employer, earning £10,000-£19,999 a year, aged 30-34

One mother on a temporary contract felt concerned that raising a health and safety issue related to her pregnancy could put her job at risk, to the extent that she decided it would be better to avoid discussing her needs with her employer.

*'A colleague suggested I should get a risk assessment, but [line manager] was always in her office and you didn't want to go and speak to her because her body language...she always seemed busy...I was thinking if I said anything or started saying my rights again and as it was a temporary contract, I would get fired, so I thought I'll leave it because there is not a lot [of time] I have left anyway and I will just*



*not come back here...If you know your employer isn't supportive you will just hide and go to work.'*

- Mother who did not raise health and safety concerns, retail sales consultant, earning £10,000-£19,999 a year, aged 20-24

#### 5.4 Mothers' perspective on whether risks were tackled

Overall, half of mothers (49%) said they were informed by their employer of risks to them or their baby. Most of these mothers (77%) felt all the identified risks were tackled. However, one in five (19%) felt that only some of the risks were tackled and 2% felt none were dealt with.

One example from the follow-up interviews showed a mother felt that their employer's approach to assessment and management of risks had been a 'tick-box' exercise to comply with company policy; that from their point of view risks had not been dealt with properly and/or that staff conducting an assessment and management of risks were not really interested in their welfare.

*'We had to do a risk assessment every however many weeks and she [manager] was supposed to meet with me to go through it but after a point she would just email it across and tell me to fill it in. There was no real interest in supporting me, it was a tick-box exercise. She didn't say that if there were concerns then we could talk about it. I never got any of that. I understand she's busy and has a team but she could have been more supportive.'*

- Mother who felt that workplace risks were not properly tackled, account manager, earning £30,000-£39,999 a year, aged 30-34

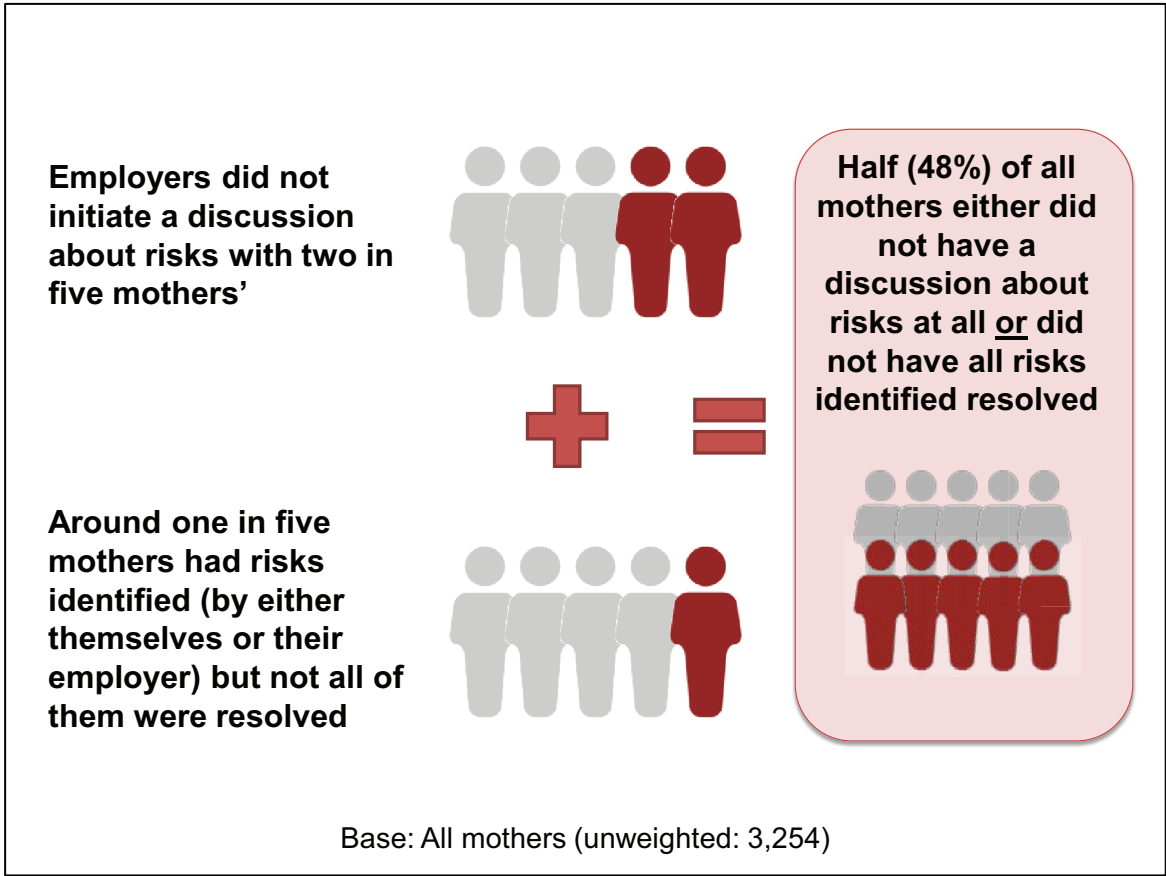
Where employers had identified risks, mothers who had worked for their employer for less than a year before going on maternity leave were twice as likely to state the risks were not completely tackled (45%) as those who had worked for their employer for more than five years (18%). It was also more common for mothers working in Caring, leisure and other service occupations (32%); those working in the Health and Social Work sector (26%); and those working part-time (26%) to say risks were not completely tackled than average (19%).

Mothers reported that employers were less likely to tackle those risks the mothers identified and raised themselves during pregnancy. One in five (19%) mothers felt they had identified risks not identified by their employer and most (86%) raised these risks with their employer. However, in just under two thirds (62%) of cases where these risks were raised mothers said the risks were not fully tackled: almost two in five of these mothers (37%) said only some of the risks were tackled and a quarter felt that none had been dealt with.

Figure 5.1 presents the proportion of mothers whose employer did not initiate a discussion on risks with them; where risks were identified and mothers felt not all of them were tackled; or both. Overall, almost half of mothers (48%) said either their

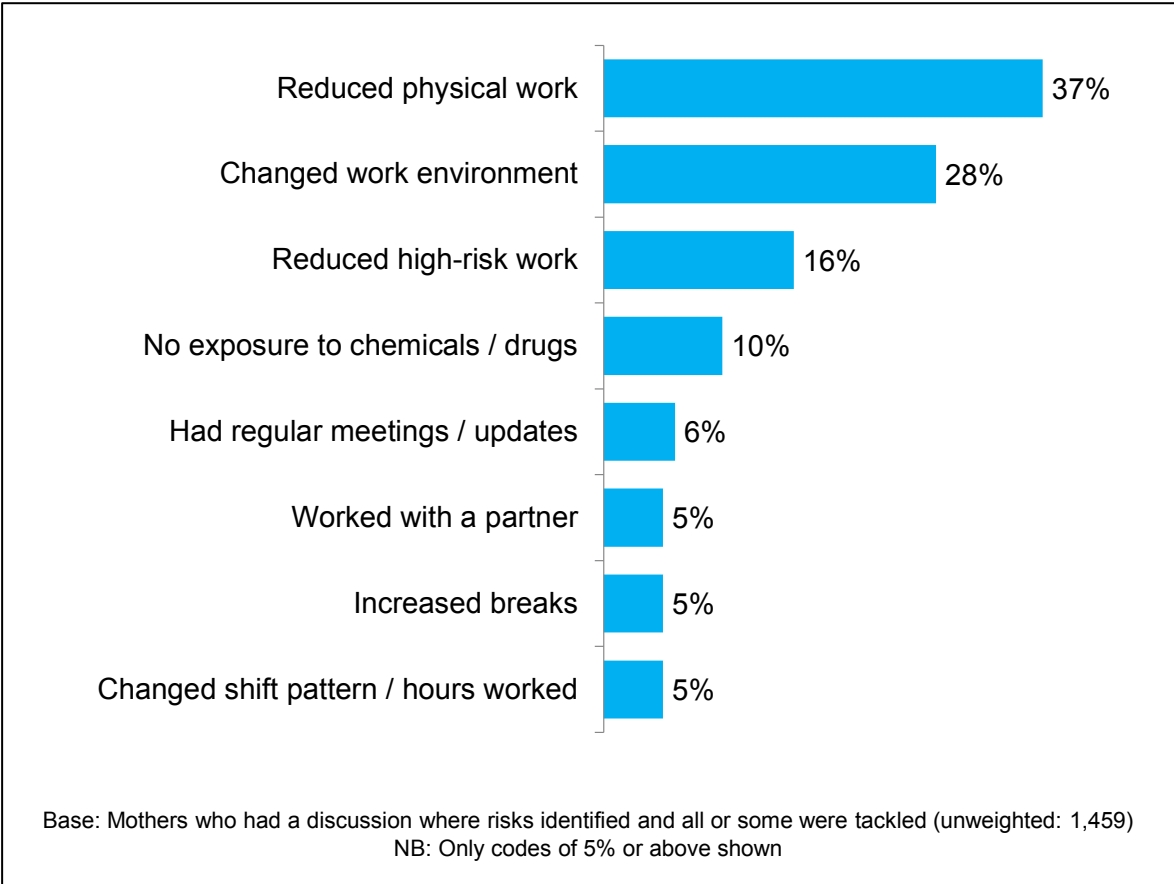
employer did not initiate a discussion about risks or had not tackled all the risks that they (the employer) had identified. These mothers were more likely to be on higher salaries (52% of those earning £30,000 a year or more; 63% of those earning £60,000 a year or more), working for smaller employers with less than 10 employees (56%), and working in the Arts, Culture and Leisure sector (66%), Real Estate and Business sector (54%) or the Education sector (54%).

**Figure 5. 1: Summary of mothers’ perspective on employer’s identification and management of risk**



The full list of ways in which mothers said employers had dealt with the risks is outlined in Figure 5.2. Where mothers said that risks were identified and tackled, it was most common for the employer to have managed risks by reducing physical work (37%) or changing the work environment (28%), for example moving the mother to a ground floor location or providing a new chair. These were also the most common actions reported by employers in the employer survey, though changing the work environment, for example moving the mother to a ground floor location or giving them a new chair, was the most common response mentioned by employers (mentioned by 31% of employers that said they had made changes as a result of health and safety risk assessments). Reducing or removing any requirement for lifting was cited as a response to health and safety risk assessments by 19% of employers that said they had made changes as a result of health and safety risk assessments.

**Figure 5. 2: How mothers reported their employer resolved risks**



**5.5 Response of mothers where risks not fully resolved**

Where risks were identified (either by the employer or mother) but mothers did not believe they were fully tackled, mothers most commonly carried on working in the same job role despite the risks (72%). Around one in five (22%) left the organisation as a result of these risks not being resolved, equivalent to 4% of all mothers.

The share of mothers leaving the organisation as a result of risks not being resolved rose to almost two in five among those with a long-term physical or mental health condition (37%) compared to the average (22%). Leaving the organisation was less common among full-time staff (17%); Managers, directors and senior officials, for example chief executives; marketing and sales directors; social services managers and directors; publicans and managers of licensed premises (6%); and those in Professional occupations (5%).

Other responses to feeling risks were not being fully resolved included starting maternity leave earlier than they ideally wanted (38%), making informal arrangements with colleagues to swap duties (38%) and taking sick leave (28%).

Results from the employers' survey show that two thirds of employers (65%) with a pregnancy in the last three years had altered the duties of at least some of their pregnant employees and 11% of employers with any mothers returning from maternity leave in the last three years had altered duties for at least some of these staff as a result of identifying risks on return from maternity leave.

## 5.6 Communication of results of risk assessments to colleagues

The follow-up research provided some examples where employers conducted thorough individual risk assessments after a mother had told them they were pregnant and identified and resolved risks. However, a lack of communication about this process to the mother's immediate colleagues sometimes resulted in some colleagues forming negative attitudes about the commitment of the mother, or in some cases failing to respect the adjustments made to their working arrangements.

### Case study: Example of a mother feeling that management did not communicate risks, nurse, earning £5,000–£9,999 a year, aged 35–39

*Angela* worked as a nurse in a care home. When she became pregnant she identified a number of risks to her health (including lifting and using a hoist) and wrote to her line manager to outline her concerns. *Angela* said that her line manager did not address these risks (or conduct a risk assessment), and she continued working as before. *Angela* said that her colleagues were not informed about her pregnancy, or the risks to her health that she had identified. She changed from morning to afternoon shifts because she was experiencing bad morning sickness. *Angela* felt that other colleagues resented this, and believed they reported her to management for 'not pulling her weight' when she refused to do certain duties (such as using the hoist), or sat down to perform certain tasks (such as feeding a service user).

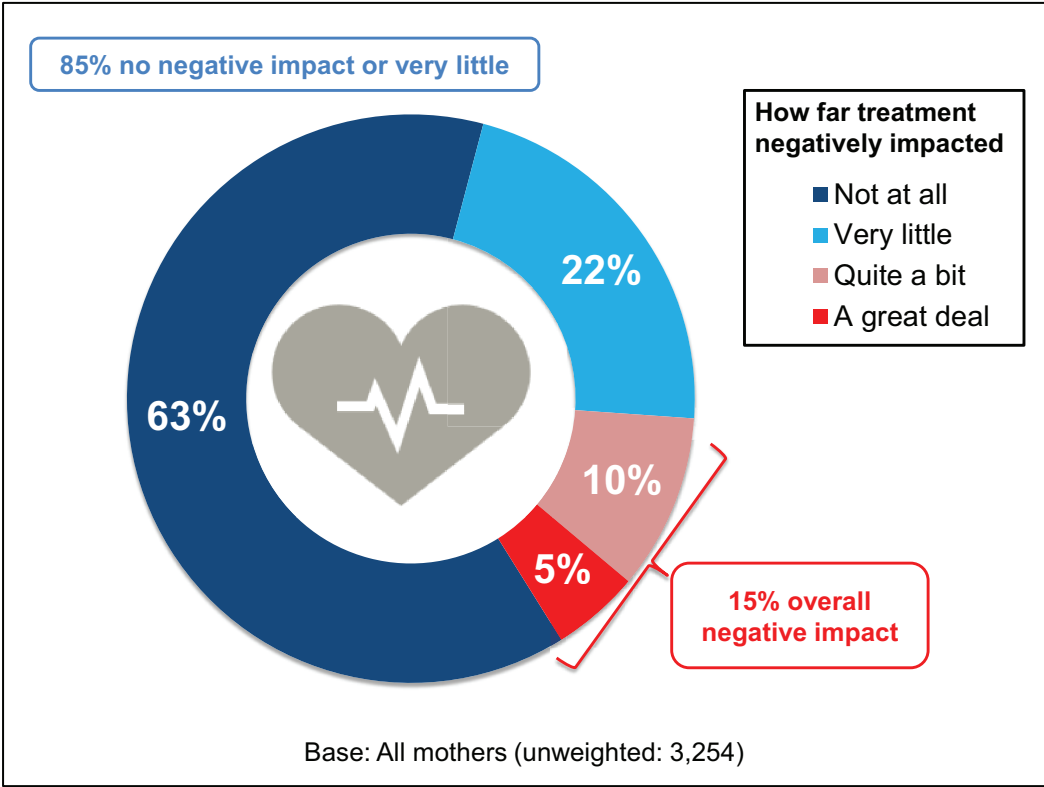
*'There was some discrimination amongst the workers ... I was not able to do as much work as I used to do when I was pregnant – [colleagues thought that] I wasn't pulling the weight and I think they were reporting me to the manager – if I even sat down even to have a drink of water the staff would report me that I am lazy.'*

## 5.7 Impact on health of treatment by colleagues

Nearly two thirds of mothers (63%) did not feel that treatment by their colleagues at work had a negative impact on their health and stress levels during pregnancy. Around one in seven mothers (15%) felt that treatment by colleagues, line managers or employers had a negative impact on their health or stress levels during pregnancy (Figure 5.3). Mothers more likely to report experiencing a negative impact on their health and stress levels were single mothers (25%), mothers with a long-term physical or mental health condition (25%), mothers in Caring, leisure or other service

occupations (24%), mothers aged under 25 (22%), and those working in the Health and Social Work sector (19%).

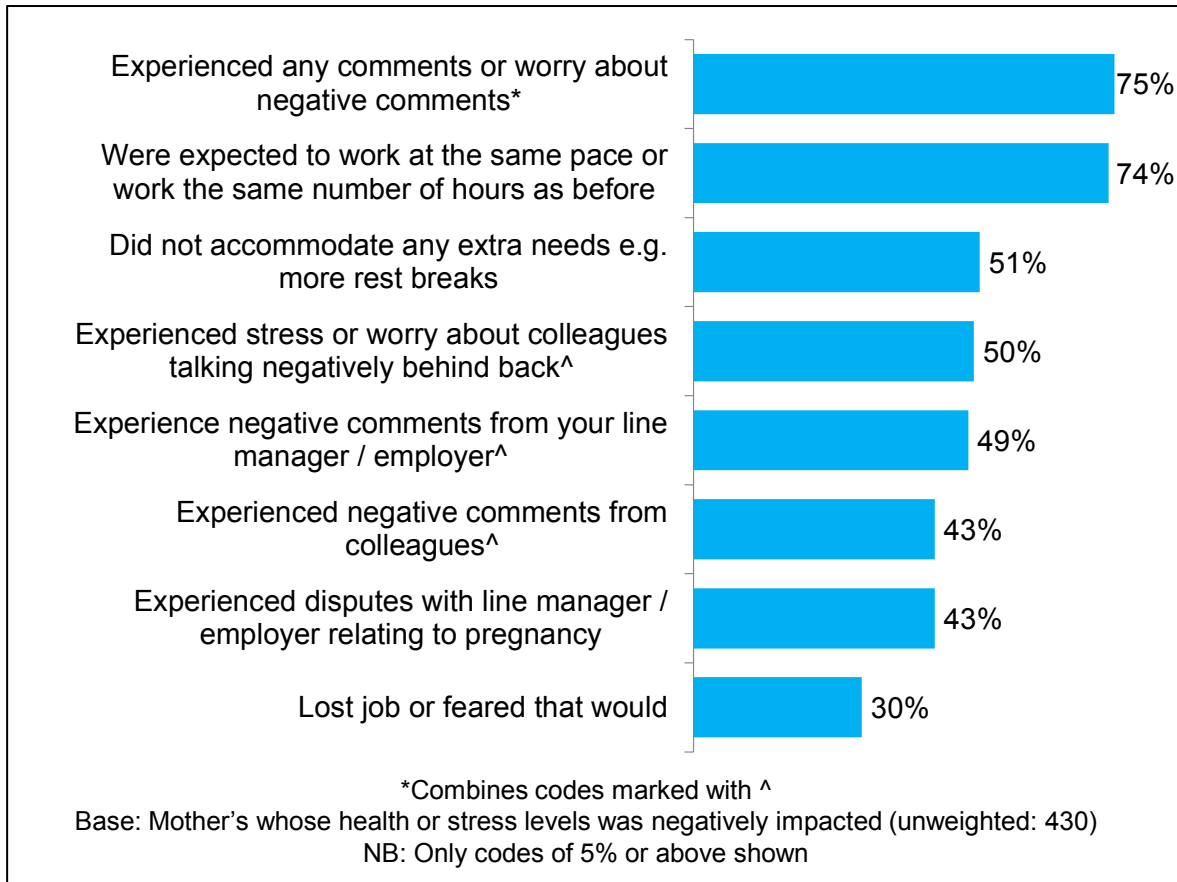
**Figure 5. 3: Extent to which treatment by colleagues/employer had a negative impact**



**Impact on health and stress levels during pregnancy**

The most common reason mothers gave for experiencing a negative impact on their health or stress levels was the expectation they would work at the same pace or do the same number of hours as before pregnancy (Figure 5.4). This was mentioned by three in four mothers (74%) who said there was a negative impact on their health or stress levels. Half (51%) cited their need for extra breaks not being accommodated.

**Figure 5. 4: Reasons mothers felt their physical health or stress levels were negatively impacted by colleagues/employer behaviour**



The example below from one of the follow-up interviews illustrates where a mother felt that they were expected to work at the same pace during their pregnancy.

*'They [employer] suggested strongly that you had to make up the time for antenatal appointments, you have to put the hours in [that you would have previously] and you have to meet those deadlines, whichever way you think you might want to do it, we'll tell you the way you should do it. It was stressful, there was never a feeling that I was wanted, and that ultimately led to me leaving.'*

- Mother who felt she was expected to work at the same pace during pregnancy, engineering project manager based at client site, earning £30,000-£39,999, aged 25-29

Case study: Example of a mother who felt adjustments for their pregnancy were not sufficiently made and reported impact on health and stress levels, insurance advisor at large firm, earning £10,000–£19,999 a year, aged 25–29

*Joanna* worked as an advisor for an insurance company. *Joanna* says that there was no formal opportunity for her to discuss health and safety issues with her managers when she became pregnant. *Joanna* said that her line manager tried to enforce a ‘no unscheduled breaks’ policy (including toilet breaks) which had recently been introduced across her department.

*Joanna* felt forced to breach this policy in order to go to the toilet, and said that this caused several arguments between *Joanna* and her line manager. She then said that she raised the issue with more senior management, and felt she had to threaten to take them to a tribunal to get them to agree to speak to her line manager about the issue.

*‘I told [her] . . . straight I’m going to go to the tribunal about it, because I’m not going to be pregnant and told I’m not allowed to go to the toilet.’*

She said the issue was not resolved formally, and she was not given permission to use the toilet whenever she needed to, however *Joanna* reported that her line manager stopped trying to enforce the policy. *Joanna* reported that the stress of the situation (and other perceived poor treatment) had a significant impact on her health.

*‘They tried to make things difficult for me like changing shifts, not allowing any breaks, not allowing me to go to the toilet, I was stressing quite a lot about it, I was worried about having a miscarriage.’*

Mothers also reported poor treatment from colleagues as having a negative impact on health or stress levels. Half (49%) attributed the negative impact on their health or stress levels to negative comments from senior members of staff such as their line manager or employer and two in five (43%) to negative comments from other colleagues. Half reported negative impacts on their health because of concerns that negative comments were being made behind their back. Worries about these comments were the most common reasons mothers gave for experiencing a negative impact on their health or stress levels.

## 6. Communication while on maternity leave

This chapter explores the degree of formal and informal contact mothers have with their employers on maternity leave. It looks at the impact of mothers having too little or unsatisfactory communication during this time. It also explores communication preferences both in terms of mode and reason for communication. Finally, the chapter looks at mothers' awareness and use of Keeping in Touch (KIT) days and their perceived effectiveness.

While employees are on maternity leave, employers are legally required to keep them informed of issues which may affect them, such as promotion opportunities or job vacancies. The amount and type of contact between an employee and employer must be 'reasonable'.

Women are also allowed to work for up to 10 days during maternity leave without it affecting their maternity pay. These are called 'Keeping in Touch (KIT) days' which are intended to be an opportunity to work, and are not designed to replace other forms of communication with employees on maternity leave. KIT days are a matter of agreement between employer and employee. Under the current legal framework, employees can neither be forced to work them, nor can they insist on taking them as they are not a right.

### 6.1 Summary

The majority of mothers felt they had or were having the right amount of contact with their employers while on maternity leave. Most mothers experienced no issues with too much (96%) or too little (74%) contact with their employers during their maternity leave. However, a quarter of mothers (26%) felt they had too little contact with their employer. The qualitative evidence suggests that sometimes too little communication left mothers feeling isolated or undervalued and sometimes it led to misunderstandings between mothers and employers about their return to work.

Mothers who wanted contact from their employer during maternity leave preferred both informal and formal communication with the mode used often depending on the reason for the contact. Generally, mothers wanted communication to increase leading up to their return to work to help prepare for their return to work.

The follow-up interviews found that experiences of KIT days were mixed. It was common for mothers to be unaware of KIT days altogether or to be unclear about their use.

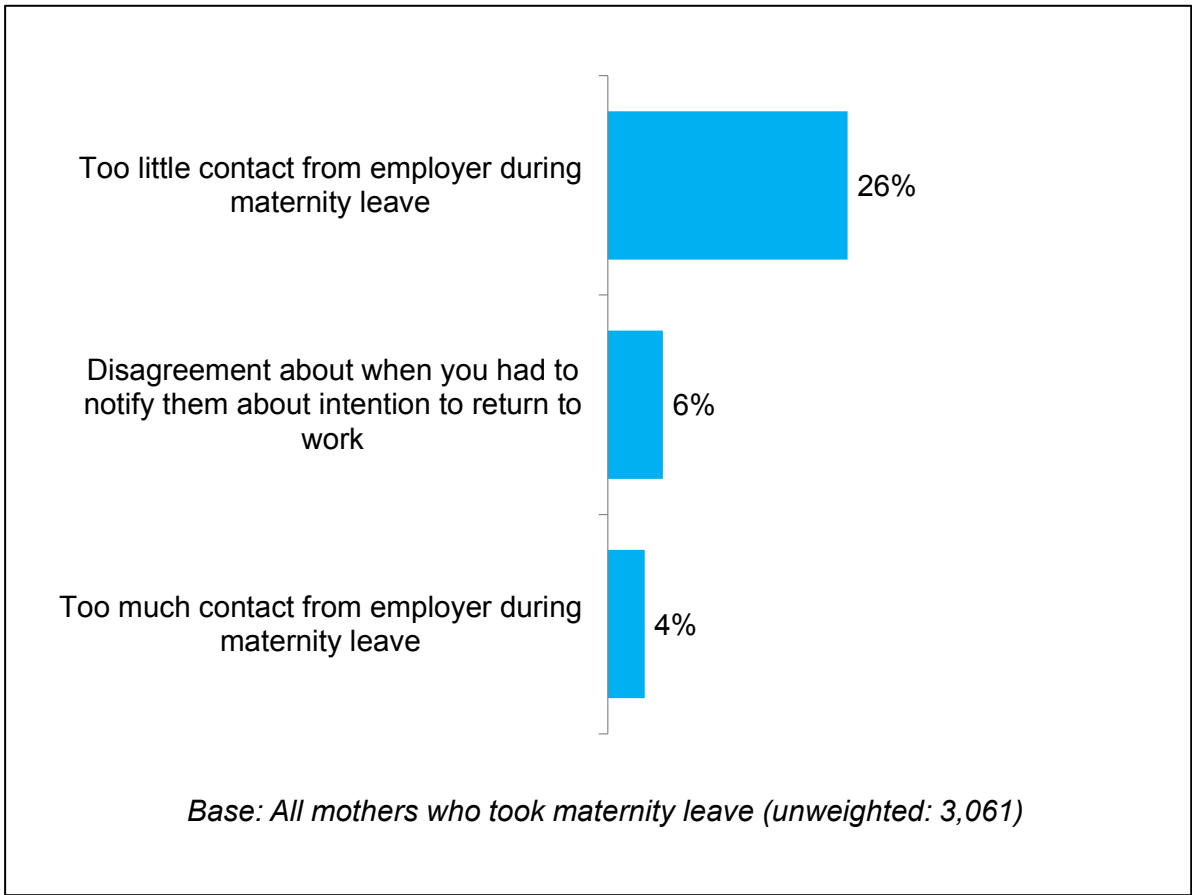


## 6.2 Frequency of contact

Overall, 70% of mothers did not report either too much or too little contact and hence the level of contact that they had with their employer can be assumed to have been at an acceptable level.

Figure 6.1 shows a range of problems mothers experienced during maternity leave relating to communications with their employer. By far the most common problem, mentioned by one in four mothers (26%), was too little contact from their employer. Of these mothers, 62% would have liked general updates about what was happening at work. In addition, around one in 10 respondents said they would have liked either a response to their queries (12%) (where their employer didn't respond); or a quicker response (9%).

**Figure 6. 1: Mothers' perspective: communication problems experienced during maternity leave**



Mothers most likely to report they had too little contact on maternity leave included those with a long-term physical or mental health condition (36%), working in the Transport and Communication sector (34%), mothers under 25 (33%), and those working in Caring, leisure and other service (34%) or Associate professional and technical (30%) occupations compared with the average (26%).

Conversely, 4% felt they received too much contact from their employer while on maternity leave. This unwanted contact tended to be about general work issues (51%); wanting them to work while on maternity leave (29%); or wanting them to return to work (26%).

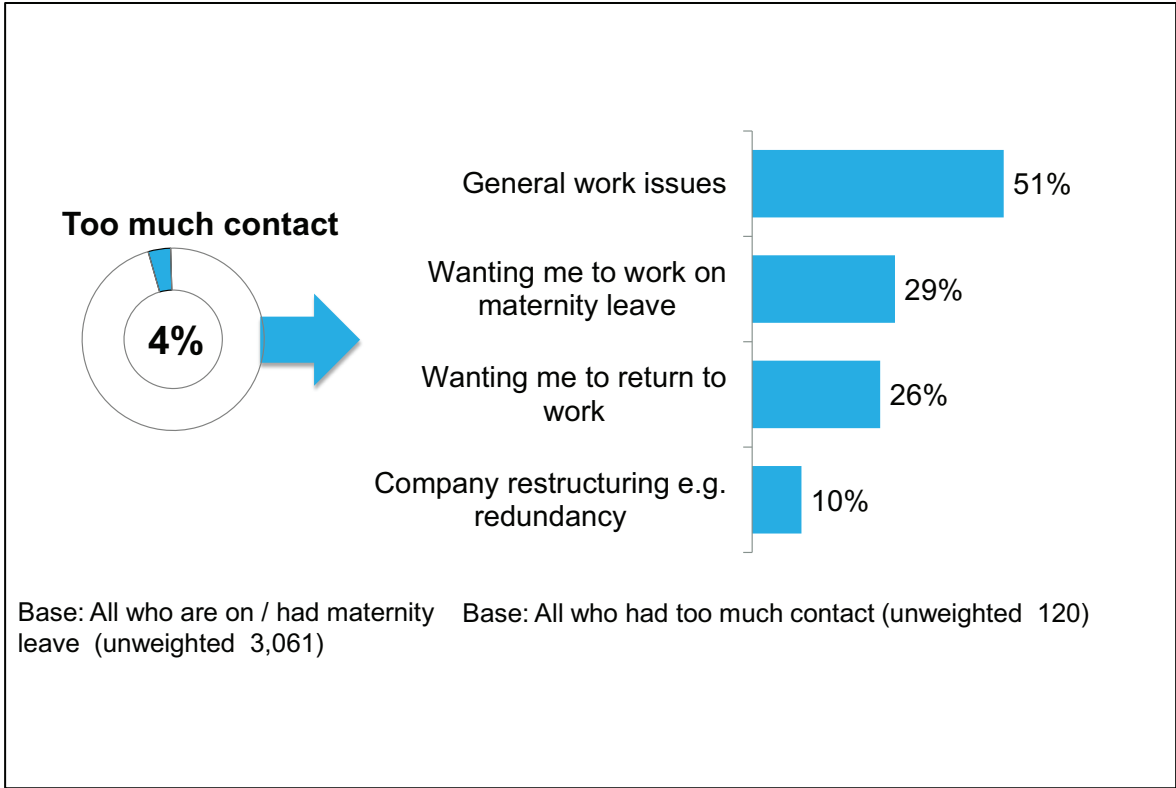
Mothers reporting they had too much contact from their employer were more likely to be working in the Education sector (6%); or to be earning over £30,000 a year (6%).

Mothers employed on casual, agency or zero-hours contracts were more likely to report disagreement about when they had to notify their employer about their intention to return to work (15%).

### Mothers experience of too much employer contact during maternity leave

As Figure 6.2 shows, mothers reported too much contact because employers were updating them (unnecessarily from their perspective) about general work issues (51%); wanting them to work while on maternity leave (29%); or wanting them to return to work (26%); or contacting them about company restructuring (10%)\*.

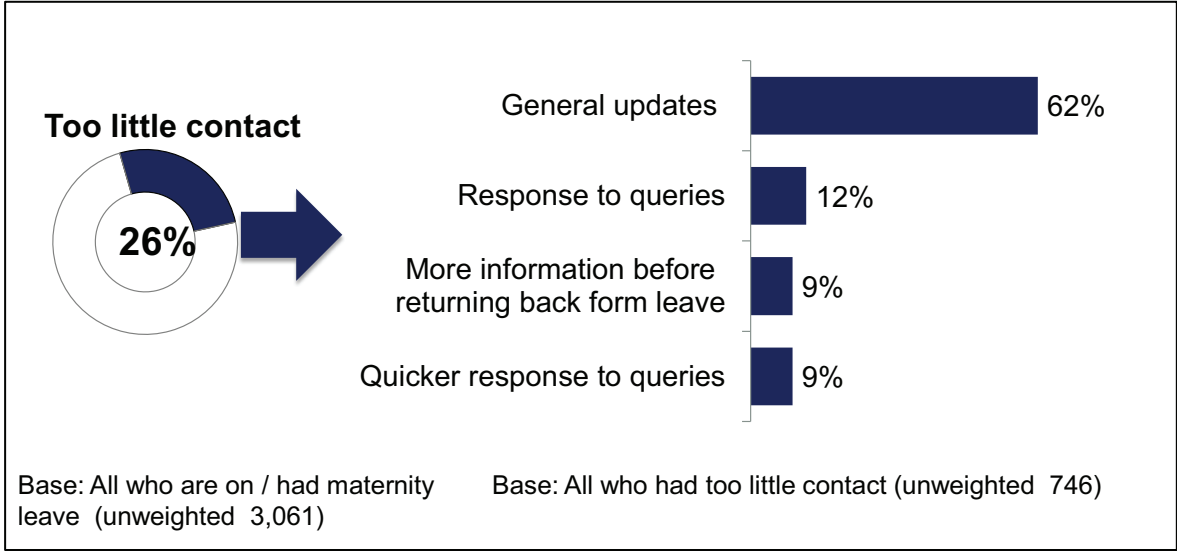
**Figure 6. 2: Mothers reporting too much contact during maternity leave**



### Mothers experience of too little employer contact during maternity leave

Mothers reporting too little contact most commonly would have liked general updates about what was happening at work (62%). In addition, around one in 10 said they would have liked either a response (12%) or a quicker response (9%) to their queries (Figure 6.3).

**Figure 6. 3: Mothers reporting too little employer contact during maternity leave**



Mothers who would have liked more frequent general updates about work were more likely to be over 35 (76% of 35–39 year olds and 79% of 40+ year olds) and higher earners (73% of those earning £30k). Mothers wanting more frequent updates were more likely to be working in Administrative or secretarial (79%) or Associate professional and technical occupations (78%) and less likely to be working in Elementary (36%) or Caring, leisure and other service (44%) occupations and mothers working in Finance (87%) or Public Administration (78%).

### 6.3 Impact of unsatisfactory communication

The follow-up interviews provided some examples of mothers who reported experiencing negative consequences relating to the frequency or type of communication they received from their employer while on maternity leave.

Where communication had not been at the preferred frequency (generally because of too little communication), mothers could feel undervalued (and were therefore anxious about whether they would be able to return to work). Some mothers said they did not receive information about organisation changes, and only became aware of these when they discussed their return to work (or even when they returned to work). They said that this made their return to work more stressful.

*'Each time, it was always me contacting them. In one way, I was quite happy not to think about work, but the department I left had completely transformed and I didn't even know!'*

- Mother who reported receiving little/no communication during maternity leave, social worker, earning £30,000-£39,999 a year, aged 30-34

*'There's a perception that you might not come back and so they forget about you but you're still there, valuable and your brain is working. I had to instigate all information I got. I was very aware I needed to stay in touch and know what was going on because it's difficult to walk back into a place.'*

- Mother who reported receiving little/no communication during maternity leave, administrator in finance company, earning £5,000-£9,999 a year, aged 30-34

#### 6.4 Desired nature of contact throughout maternity leave

It was clear from the follow-up interviews that preferences related to the frequency of contact varied considerably from mother to mother. Sometimes mothers wanted very infrequent contact, usually for one of the following reasons:

- wanting to keep completely separate (or 'compartmentalise') working and home lives/wanting to concentrate on their child;
- not wanting the stress of having to think about work issues;
- only wanting contact with their employer towards the end of maternity leave; and
- preferring to instigate contact with the employer themselves.

*'I had the right amount. I wouldn't have wanted any more. You just want to be around your baby and concentrate on them instead of thinking about, in the back of your mind, the stress of work. So I contacted them as little as possible.'*

- Mother who wanted little communication during maternity leave, finance administrator, earning £10,000-£19,999 a year, aged 30-34

However, in terms of the types of information from their employer that mothers wanted to receive, this was generally a combination of social contact (enquiries about the health of the mother and her baby and invitations to any social events taking place during her maternity leave), and updates on workplace developments. For example, structural changes in their organisation (such as staff turnover; management changes; promotions; career development opportunities) and how their role might be affected. In some cases, mothers would have been interested to hear about new projects or clients.

In addition mothers reported that they were not adequately informed about career development opportunities; one in 20 said they were not informed about

redundancies that might impact them. The following groups were more likely to report these issues:

- Career development opportunities: A higher proportion of mothers identifying with a minority ethnic group (13%) felt that they were inadequately informed by the employer about career development opportunities as did those earning over £30,000 a year (15%); full-time workers (11%); and those working in Associate professional and technical occupations (15%), compared with average (10%);
- Redundancies: Those working full-time were more likely to state they had not been adequately informed about redundancies (5% compared to 3% part-time); as were those with a long-term physical or mental health condition (8% compared to 4% without).

Some mothers would have liked phone calls from their employer but it was more common for mothers to prefer just to be included in general company updates rather than to receive targeted information. Towards the end of maternity leave, mothers tended to feel that face-to-face contact was more important.

*'The weekly newsletter was brilliant because it has everything in it. It has got people who have done really well, any opportunities in the business so new roles, any leavers, how the business is doing with sales, new starters so you literally had everything in that newsletter. Email is good as you can read it when you are ready or when you have time.'*

- Mother who appreciated receiving a newsletter during their maternity leave, finance administrator, earning £10,000-£19,999 a year, aged 30-34

Mothers who were happy with the frequency and nature of contact during maternity leave had sometimes agreed a communication plan with their employer. For some it appeared the contact had been about right partly as a result of personal relationships, with colleagues keeping them informed about changes in the workplace. Other mothers at the same workplace may therefore have had different experiences as communication practice was not specifically linked to company policy or manager attitude.

One mother described a process which she felt was best practice which included a formalised 'buddy' system where an appointed colleague kept her up to date on an informal, social basis. Another positive example, as the case study below shows, was the use of a 'maternity coach'.

Case study: Example of good practice in communicating with employees while they are on maternity leave, senior manager at international bank, earning £90,000–£99,999 a year, aged 30–34.

*Reema* was still on maternity leave [for her third child] at the time of interviewing. In her case, a communication plan was agreed before she went on leave with specific milestones when her employer would get in touch. *Reema* was friendly with her other team mates and had informal contact with them prior to giving birth and once the baby was born. She knew after three months there would be a 'catch-up chat' and again at six months and her maternity coach (who was paid for by her employer but worked for a different organisation) would visit her at her house.

*'That's all about transitioning from work to maternity leave to going back to work and that's really helpful. She's completely independent.'*

The level of contact was discussed openly between the employer and *Reema* and according to *Reema* this was largely driven by her needs – she did not feel pressured into having more contact than she wanted and felt the frequency of communication she had with her employer was ideal.

*'They say: "Let's not bother with any formal contact in the first three or four months because you're going to be so taken up by the baby." And then the contact at three or four months is only if I wanted it.'*

Her employer and team also kept in touch on an informal basis, updating her on staff changes and also invited her to social events which prevented her from feeling isolated. *Reema* appreciated her employer's flexibility regarding the frequency of contact and their willingness to use different modes of communication depending on the reason for contact.

*'It's mostly email and then if we want anything a bit more in-depth then it'll be a phone call. I do remember last time when I had [second child], I went in for a meeting with the head of the team. We just went for a coffee about my return to work and I think I will this time as well. It's just quite nice to chat face-to-face so there probably will be one or two face-to-face but that'll be nearer the time of return to work.'*

*Reema* was extremely positive about contact with her employer due to:

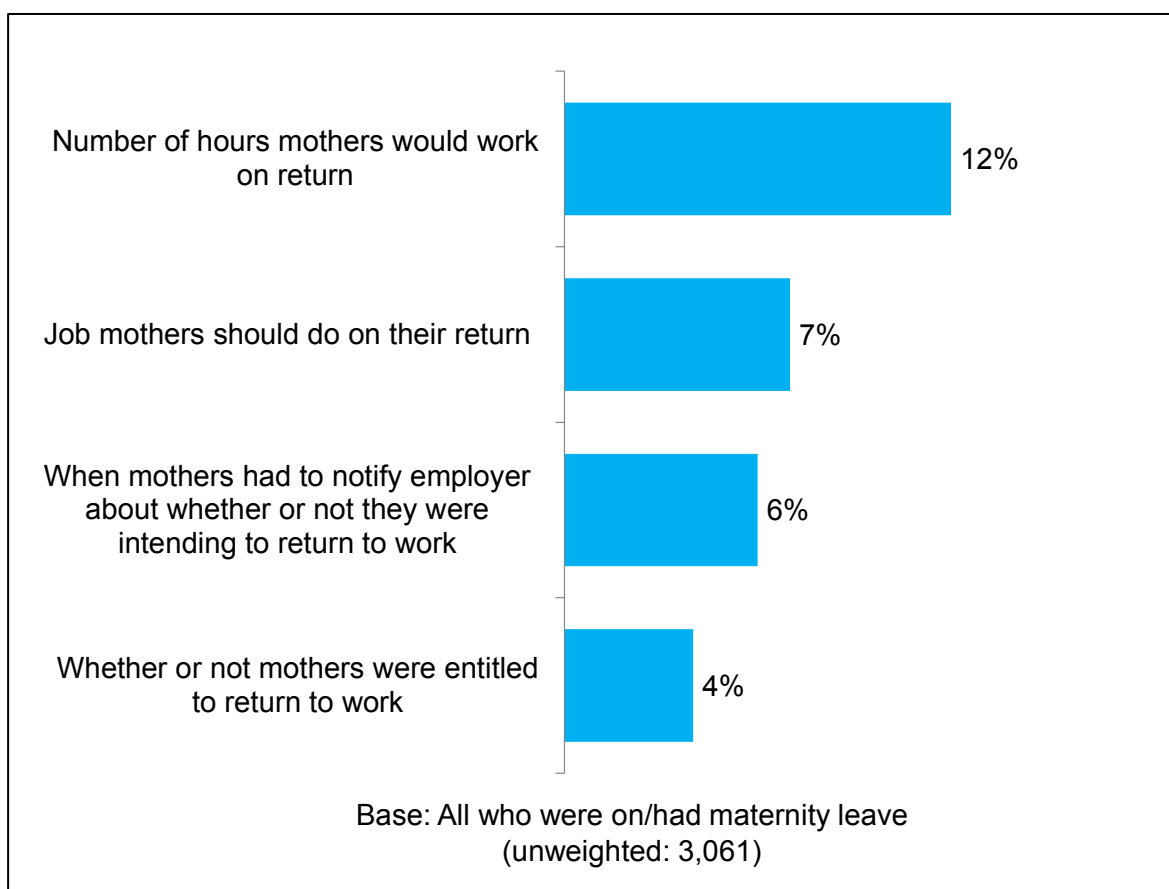
- open discussion about her needs taking place prior to her maternity leave;
- a communication plan being agreed so she knew what to expect;
- the frequency of contact being largely decided by her;
- a mix of informal and formal communication;

- good working relationships with colleagues enabling natural, informal communication;
- appropriate modes of communication being used; and
- use of an independent professional (maternity coach) to aid the transition to her maternity leave and return from maternity leave.

## 6.5 Negative experiences of return to work discussions

Mothers experienced some disagreements with their employer discussing return to work arrangements. These could potentially have been mitigated through better communication during maternity leave (Figure 6.4). Some mothers reported disagreements about the number of hours they would work upon return (12%); the job mothers return to (7%); or the timing of their return to work notification (6%). A low share (4%) of mothers disagreed with employers about whether or not they were entitled to return to work.

**Figure 6. 4: Disagreements with employer experienced by mothers while on maternity leave**



Some mothers were more likely to report disagreements with their employer about their return from maternity leave:

- Mothers with a long-term physical or mental health condition were more likely to say they had disagreements about the number of hours they would work on returning (19%).
- Mothers who were Managers, directors and senior officials were more likely to report disagreements with their employer about which job they returned to after maternity leave (12%); as were those earning more than £30,000 a year (10%); and those in Associate professional and technical occupations (9%).
- Mothers with a long-term physical or mental health condition were more likely to report disagreements with their employer about notifying them when they were returning to work (11%); as were those working in Caring, leisure and other service (11%) and Sales and customer service occupations (10%); as well as those earning less than £30,000 a year (7%).

Furthermore, almost one in 10 mothers (9%) felt pressured to return to work sooner than they wanted to and around one in 20 to work while on maternity leave (6%).

There were some examples in the follow-up interviews of mothers feeling pressured to return to work before they wanted to.

Another mother said that her employer wrote to her expressing their disappointment that they had not heard from her for a few months, despite nothing reportedly being agreed previously in terms of contact and it not being near the end of her maternity leave. The letter also reportedly questioned her return dates to the point that she felt pressured into communicating and deciding about her return. In the end, the mother handed in her notice nine months into her maternity leave.

*'I knew when I was supposed to return and we weren't nearing that. He wrote to say he was disappointed and to confirm what dates I was starting back on, if I wanted flexible working and things.'*

- Mother who felt pressured to decide about return, optometrist working at small opticians, earning £40,000-£49,999 a year, aged 30-34

## 6.6 Keeping In Touch (KIT) days

The follow-up interviews identified a number of mothers who reported that their employer did not discuss the option to use KIT days. Others say they discussed using KIT days only to be told that these 'were not needed', or the employer and mother had loosely agreed that they would organise some KIT days but neither were proactive in arranging them, so they never took place.



Mothers may use up to 10 KIT days at the employers' discretion. Typically, mothers using KIT days used fewer than 10 days.

Of those mothers who felt they had too little contact with their employer while on maternity leave, one in 12 (8%) would have liked to have been able to take some KIT days and 2% would have liked to have taken more KIT days than they did.

The follow-up interviews with mothers showed that there was some confusion about the use of KIT days. Some mothers used the terms 'Keeping in Touch days' or 'KIT days' when discussing general communication with their employer while on maternity leave.

The mothers who had used KIT days to work during maternity leave had both positive and negative experiences. When beneficial, they were seen as a useful and supportive tool in helping ease mothers back into the workplace. In addition, they were an opportunity for mothers to undertake any training required or contribute to project or client work; enabling them to feel valued.

*'In terms of the KIT days, what I tried to do was to get involved in the team meetings and strategy planning meetings so he said he would let me know when meetings were happening and we discussed which I could attend and which I couldn't and it was fine. I got involved in some senior management meetings but just to be presented to rather than to present. Nothing was ever forced, it was just that I could come back as I wanted to spend time in the business as and when it suited me.'*

- Mother who found KIT days beneficial, manager at large company, earning £40,000-£49,999 a year, aged 30-34

In a small number of follow-up interviews, it was reported by mothers that employers used KIT days in a way mothers felt did not consider their needs. For example, one mother had intended to use her KIT days to update her training towards the end of her maternity leave and phase her return to work. Instead, she felt her employer used them as an opportunity to schedule her for more days than she had agreed to and she therefore felt effectively forced to return to work earlier than she intended.

*'I went back to the same place, I went sooner than I should have because I did some Keeping in Touch days which we'd agreed I'd do. But she started putting me in two days a week from then. I didn't mind because it was extra money for me at the end of the day, but I just thought I should still be on maternity leave. I should still be with my little boy rather than working three days a week instead just doing one day a week.'*

- Mother who reported that her KIT days were used inappropriately, beauty therapist, earning £5,000-£9,999 a year, aged 20-24

## 7. Returning to work

This chapter explores the length of maternity leave taken by mothers; the factors that affected length of maternity leave; and whether it was the length of maternity leave they ideally wanted to take. It also focuses on job role on return to work, in terms of the nature of the role as well as any changes in salary and hours worked.

All employees can take up to 52 weeks' maternity leave if they are officially employed at their workplace and have given the correct notice period (15 weeks before an employee's due date). This is applicable regardless of how long an employee has been with their employer, how many hours they work or how much they get paid. To qualify for statutory maternity pay, however, an employee must have completed 26 weeks of continuous service by the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth.

The first 26 weeks of statutory leave is known as 'Ordinary Maternity Leave', the last 26 weeks as 'Additional Maternity Leave'. Not all 26 weeks have to be taken by an employee. However, employees must take compulsory maternity leave, which is two weeks, immediately after the birth (or four weeks for factory workers).

Pregnancy and maternity discrimination is unlawful under the Equality Act 2010. Any unfavourable treatment because of pregnancy, pregnancy-related sickness or maternity leave is unlawful. This includes being overlooked for a promotion, removal of responsibilities and denial of a bonus because of pregnancy or maternity leave.

Employees have the right to return to exactly the same job role if they return within or at the end of 'Ordinary Maternity Leave'. If an employee returns within or following 'Additional Maternity Leave', they have the right to return to exactly the same job role; or if it is not reasonably practical, a similar job role which is a suitable alternative. Similar job role means that job is suitable to the employee and appropriate in the circumstances and that its provisions and terms are not substantially less favourable to the previous role. It would be unlawful for an employer to not offer the same or a similar job role to employees following maternity leave.

### 7.1 Summary

Around eight in 10 (79%) mothers returned to work after the birth of their baby, most commonly after nine to 10 months of maternity leave (44%). Most returned to the same employer (70%).

Where mothers returned to the same employer, this was generally to the same job title and description (83% of returners). However, despite returning to the same job, 6% described other changes to their role that were against their wishes. Sometimes mothers felt they had a reduction in responsibilities and/or felt less valued. A further 4% returned to a different job that was not what they wanted to do.

Most mothers who returned to work for the same employer felt treated no differently on their return from maternity leave (85%). However, as a result of their pregnancy, almost one in 10 (9%) felt treated worse. These were most likely to be mothers in the Finance (18%) or Transport and Communications (16%) sectors. In addition, mothers in the private sector were more likely than those in the public sector to feel they were treated worse (11% compared to 8%). Mothers earning over £30,000 a year (12%) were also more likely to feel that they were treated worse on their return from maternity leave. One in 20 (5%) felt they were treated better.

## 7.2 Length of Maternity Leave

The average length of maternity leave taken by mothers was nine to 10 months (44%). One third of mothers (34%) reported that they took longer than 10 months whereas one in five took less than nine months (21%).

Mothers earning over £30,000 a year (46%) and mothers over 35 years old (45% 35–39 and 48% over 40) were also more likely to take maternity leave of over 10 months.

One in eight mothers (12%) took six months or less maternity leave. This was more likely among mothers working in Elementary occupations (21%) and small organisations (18% of those with fewer than 10 employees).

Many mothers indicated in the follow-up interviews that the length of maternity leave was driven by their financial situation. Mothers took as much paid maternity leave as they could and it was common to have wanted a longer maternity leave than they had (a year was generally mentioned as the ideal length of maternity leave).

*'I possibly would have liked a little bit longer but that's when I was going to stop getting paid so I couldn't afford to stay off longer. I would have liked a year.'*

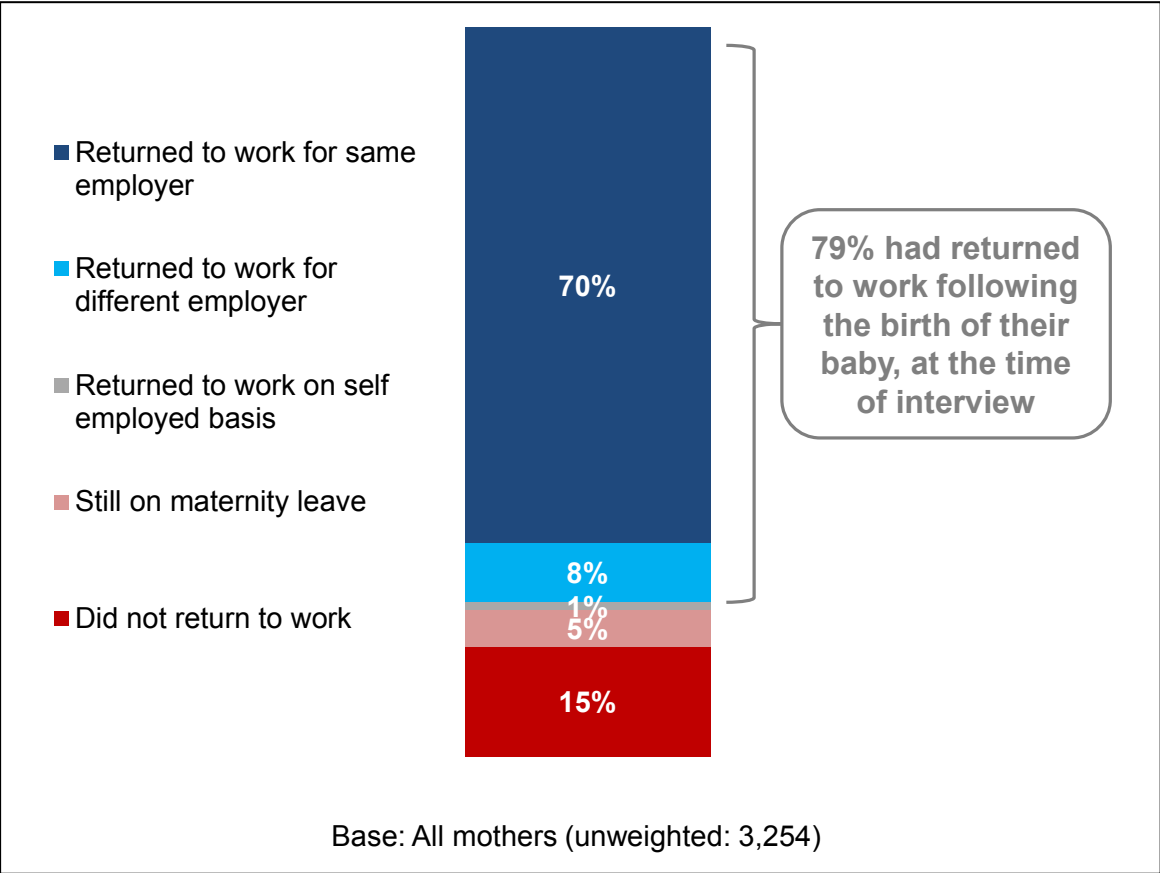
- Mother whose length of maternity leave was driven by financial situation, financial collections adviser, earning £10,000-£19,999 a year, aged 20-24

Some mothers felt that the length of maternity leave they took was about right (this view wasn't specific to a particular length of maternity leave). These mothers described 'feeling ready to return' when they did for various reasons. For example: they felt the baby was the right age for their return; they were ready to get their 'head back into work' and re-establish their role in their company; or were getting lonely on maternity leave.

## 7.3 Job role on return to work

Most mothers had returned to work following the birth of their baby (79%), and of these most returned to the same employer (Figure 7.1). One in 12 (8%) returned to work for a different employer. 5% of mothers were on maternity leave at the time of their interview.

**Figure 7. 1: Mothers' return to work status**

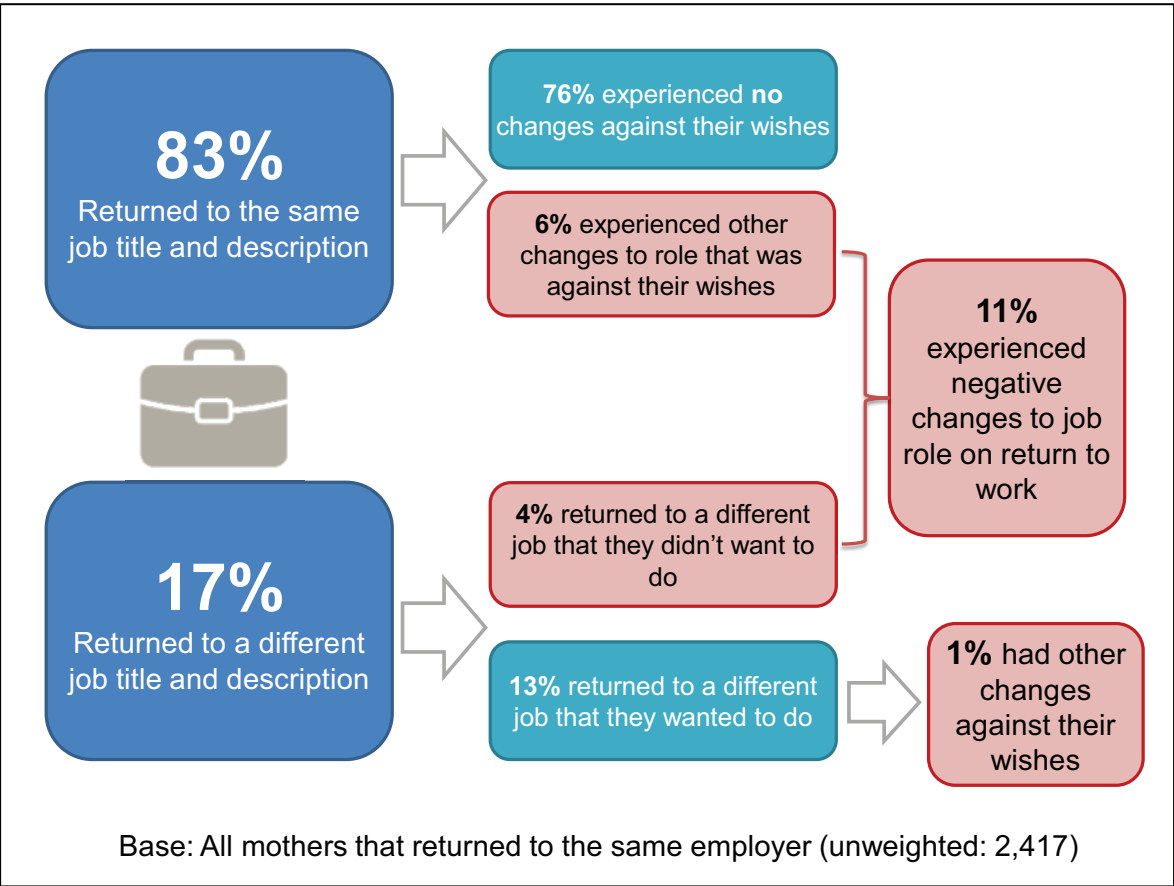


Most mothers who returned to work for the same employer felt treated no differently on their return from maternity leave (85%). However, as a result of their pregnancy, almost one in 10 (9%) felt treated worse. Mothers in the Finance (18%) or Transport and Communications (16%) sectors were more likely to report feeling treated worse. In addition, mothers in the private sector were more likely than those in the public sector to feel they were treated worse (11% compared to 8%). Mothers earning over £30,000 a year (12%) were also more likely to feel that they were treated worse on their return from maternity leave. One in 20 (5%) felt they were treated better on return from maternity leave.

The majority of mothers (83%) who returned to work for the same employer returned to the same job title and description. One in six mothers (17%) returned to the same employer but to a different job title and description.

Figure 7.2 presents the nature of mothers' job roles on their return to work. The red boxes indicate negative or possibly discriminatory changes as a result of their pregnancy. Overall, one in 10 mothers (11%) returning to work for the same employer had a job role that was changed against their wishes.

**Figure 7. 2: Changes to job role on return to work**



One in 25 mothers (4%) returned to a different job they didn't want to do. The follow-up interviews provided some examples of this. In some cases job roles and descriptions changed due to company or department restructure; mothers sometimes felt that they were being taken advantage of due to being on maternity leave.

Other mothers (6%) stated that despite returning to the same job role and description, they experienced other changes to their job role against their wishes. Louise's story below illustrates this.

These changes can include: change to the nature of their job or duties; given duties at a lower level; feeling their opinion was less valued and/or having fewer opportunities for progression. In the follow-up interviews some mothers expanded on feeling less valued, or in some cases, 'effectively demoted' on their return from maternity leave. Often, these mothers described their job as less challenging or more boring and as a result they felt less respected.

Case study: Example of returning to the same job role and description but reportedly accompanied by other changes against wishes, public relations director for large hospitality organisation, earning £100,000 or more a year, aged 35–39

*Louise* was in a new senior role in the Hotels and Restaurant sector when she became pregnant with her first child. She felt she was succeeding in her job and getting on very well with her senior management team. However, as soon as she announced her pregnancy, *Louise* felt that changed and she said she was treated poorly by her managers and others in her team. Throughout her pregnancy she said she received negative comments, and this continued on her return from maternity leave. However, in terms of organisational policies and procedures her experience was positive as she was reportedly allowed time off for antenatal appointments during work time, was given a very good maternity package and was granted her flexible working request.

*Louise* felt she had very little contact from her employer during maternity leave, following this she returned to the same job role and description, but she found from her perspective that lots of her responsibilities and workload had been taken away.

*'On paper it's the same job but not in reality, it's like what I was doing 10 years ago. I've got half the job; I'm bored senseless. They've taken away anything that gives me any credibility or gravitas internally, any direct relationship with the exec committee or the CEO.'*

She felt that she was being forced out by her direct management and team. She felt that they were shocked she had returned to work from maternity leave, and were now just waiting for her to leave.

*'It feels like a campaign. I think they were shocked that I came back to work after the way they treated me, so I think they had to rethink their move.'*

#### 7.4 Hours worked and salary on return to work

Over half of mothers (56%) who returned to work worked fewer hours than before maternity leave. Two in five (39%) worked the same hours and 5% worked more. Mothers working more hours on return from maternity leave were more likely to have worked for their employer for less than a year before they went on maternity leave (15%); earn less than £10,000 a year (11%); or work part-time (11%).

This change in hours was broadly consistent with changes in salary. Most often, mothers worked fewer hours and earned less on their return to work (43%) or worked the same hours for the same pay (29%). One in 10 earned the same for working fewer hours (10%) and 8% worked the same hours and earned more.

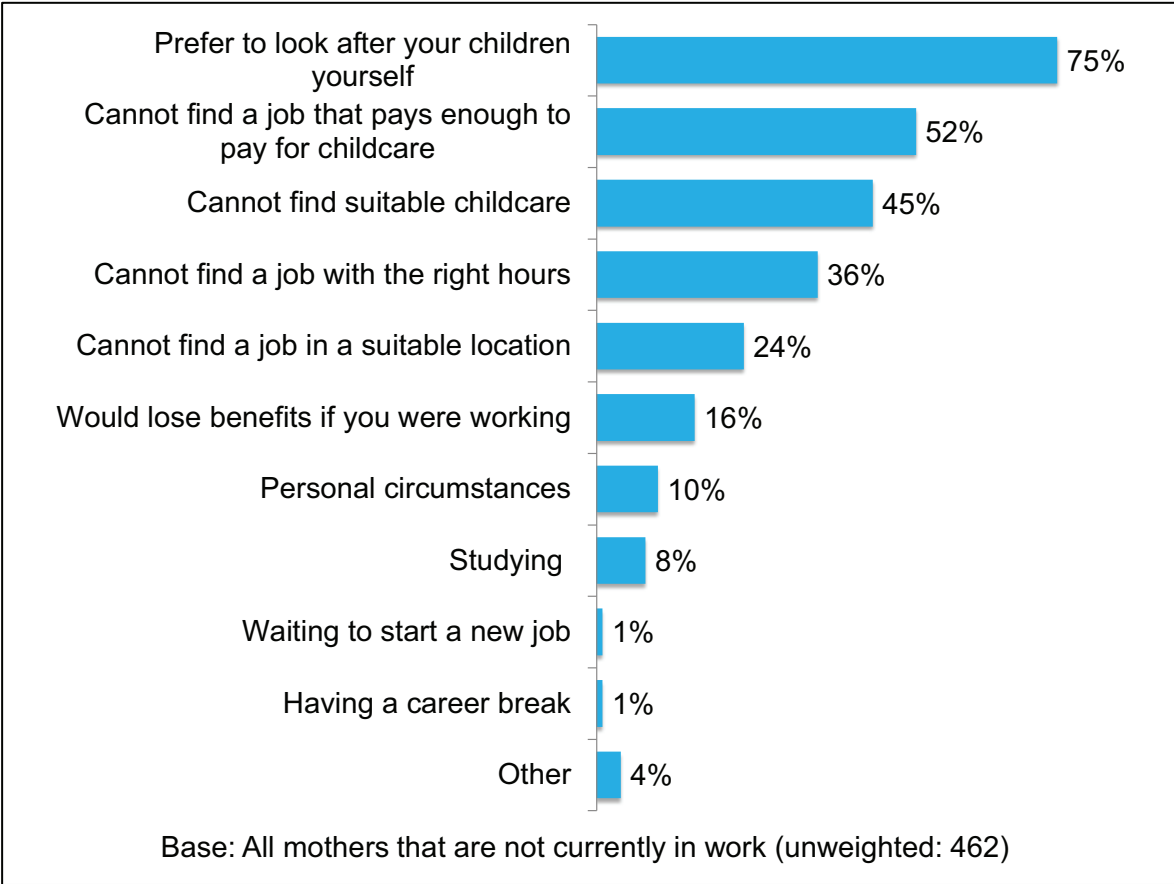
A minority of mothers (3%) reported a fall in their hourly pay; either working the same hours but earning less (2%) or working more hours and earning the same as before pregnancy (1%).

### 7.5 Reasons for not working

At the time of their interview, one in five mothers (19%) were not working. Mothers under the age of 25 (39%) were more likely to not be working at the time of their interview, as were those who had worked in occupations such as Sales and customer service (37%), or those in Caring, leisure and other services (27%); or those who were earning less than £30,000 a year (22%) when pregnant.

The majority of these mothers (75%) stated that they were not working because they preferred to look after their children themselves. Other reasons mothers gave related to childcare, including not being able to find a job that paid enough to cover childcare costs (52%) and not being able to find suitable childcare (45%). Further reasons for mothers not returning to work are detailed in Figure 7.3.

**Figure 7. 3: Reasons for mothers not returning to work after maternity leave**



In the follow-up interviews; several mothers said support to help with childcare affordability and accessibility would help. Some mothers felt this could enable them to return to work at the time that best suited them; there were some examples of mothers not extending maternity leave or not returning to work when they wanted to because of childcare issues.

*'Childcare is a nightmare, it is ridiculously expensive...I think there should be more help with childcare, just the cost of it is ridiculous because it pretty much wipes out my salary.'*

- Mother who felt support with childcare costs would be beneficial, assistant producer for media company, earning £20,000-£29,999 a year, aged 40-44



## 8. Redundancy

This chapter explores redundancy, including compulsory redundancies; those who took voluntary redundancy; those who were made redundant but offered an alternative position at the same or a higher level; and those who were made redundant as part of a wider redundancy exercise. It should be noted when interpreting this chapter that the period under review was one of economic instability and thus overall redundancies were likely to be higher than in times of stability.

If employers plan to make redundancies, to comply with the law they should ensure that the selection criteria used are objective, fair and non-discriminatory. This includes that the employer must not include pregnancy-related sickness absence or absence on maternity leave as part of the selection criteria for redundancy. This does not mean, however, that an employer must automatically assume that an employee absent by reason of pregnancy would be the top performer in a redundancy exercise had she been in work since this could amount to discrimination against those employees who are present and whose skills and capabilities can be assessed. A fair assessment of capabilities must be made.

If there are other suitable alternative vacancies, Regulation 10 of the Maternity and Parental Leave Regulations 1999 gives employees who are made redundant during either their ordinary or additional maternity leave the right to be offered one of these vacancies before any other employee. If employers do not do this then the dismissal is likely to be automatically unfair. Employees on maternity leave must be made aware of any suitable alternative vacancies and offered them without the need to apply. However, if redundancy takes effect following return from maternity leave, the employee no longer has this protection.

### 8.1 Summary

Around one in 20 mothers (6%) were made redundant at some point during pregnancy; maternity leave; or on return from maternity leave.

Of those made redundant:

- One in four (26%) took voluntary redundancy;
- Just over one in four (27%) were offered an alternative position at the same or higher level (48% were offered an alternative position of any kind);
- Two thirds (67%) stated that other people were made redundant at the same time.

1% of mothers stated that they experienced compulsory redundancy where no others were made redundant and they were not offered an alternative position. Mothers in this group were more likely to be in Skilled trades occupations (9%).

## 8.2 Prevalence and timing of redundancy

Around one in 20 mothers (6%) were made redundant at some point during pregnancy; maternity leave; or on return from maternity leave. 1% were made redundant while pregnant; 3% while on maternity leave; and 2% on their return from maternity leave. A further 3% of mothers had discussed redundancy with their employer.

Mothers working in the Transport and Communications (16%), Finance (12%) and Manufacturing (10%) sectors were more likely to experience redundancy. In contrast, mothers in Public Administration (2%); and Health and Social work (4%) sectors were less likely to have been made redundant.

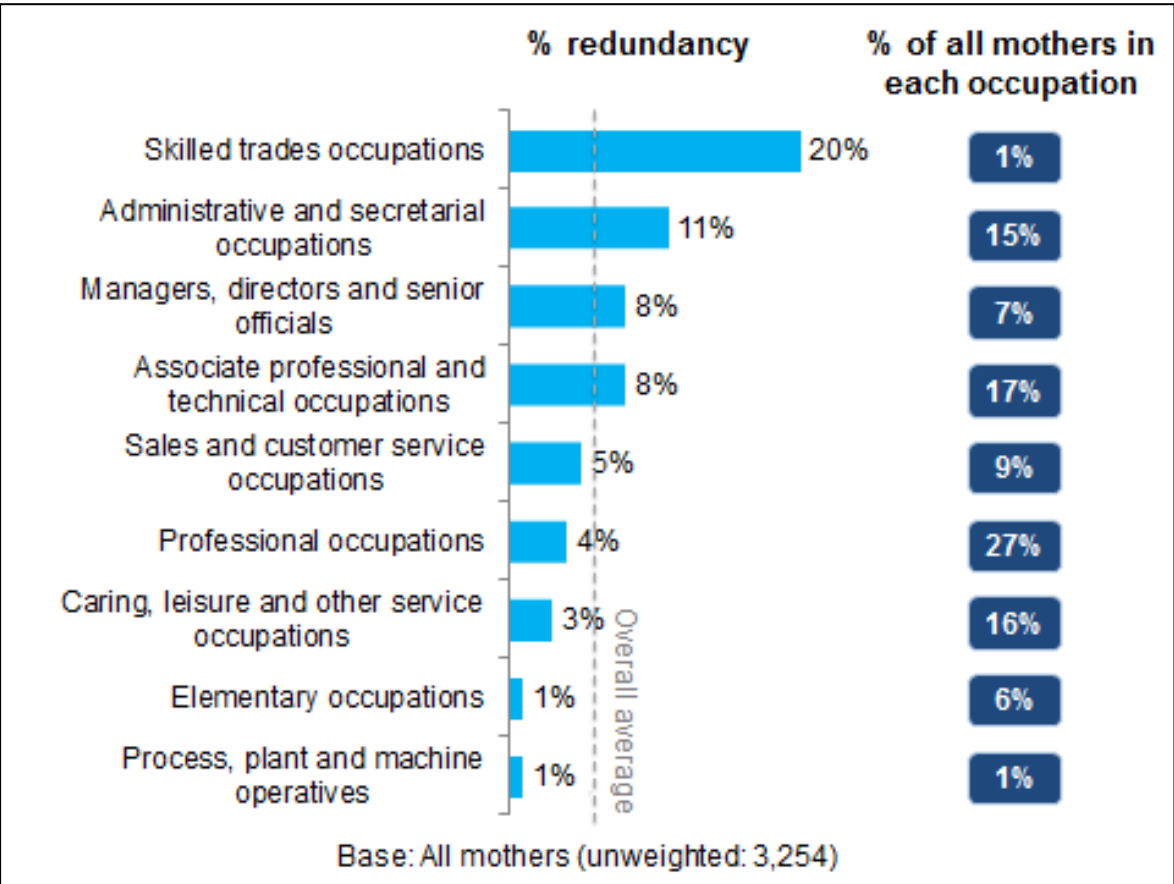
Results from the employer survey found almost one in four employers (23%) had made staff redundant in the last three years. Of the employers who had a pregnant employee in the past three years, 2% had made a pregnant woman redundant; and 2% had made a woman on maternity leave redundant.

Large employers (13%) were most likely to have made pregnant women redundant, rising to 14% among large public sector employers and 16% among large employers with no trade union. Other groups more likely to have made pregnant women redundant included Finance (13%) and Public Administration (7%) sectors, employers with a staff association but no trade union (10%), and public sector employers (4%).

Similarly, large employers were also most likely to make women returning from maternity leave redundant (12%, again rising to 15% among large employers without a trade union).

The rate of redundancy as reported by mothers by occupational group is shown in Figure 8.1, and shows that mothers in Skilled trades occupations reported the highest incidence of redundancy (20%), followed by mothers in Administrative and secretarial occupations (11%). One in 12 mothers (8%) in Manager, director or senior official roles were made redundant, as were one in 12 mothers (8%) in Associate professional and technical occupations.

**Figure 8. 1: Proportion of mothers made redundant by occupation**



Mothers who were not a trade union member during pregnancy; maternity leave; or return after maternity leave were more likely to be made redundant (5% compared to 3% of mothers who were members of a trade union).

**8.3 Voluntary redundancy and other positions offered**

A quarter of mothers (26%) made redundant, took voluntary redundancy (2% of all mothers). Mothers who took voluntary redundancy were more likely to be:

- working in the Transport and Communication sector (8% of mothers in this sector);
- single mothers (4%);
- working in Administrative and secretarial or Associate professional and technical occupations (4% and 3% of mothers in these occupational groups respectively);
- working for a small employer (3%); and
- working in the private sector (2%).

The follow-up interviews did identify, however, in some cases it was felt by mothers that pressure was put on them to take voluntary redundancy, and taking it was not always perceived to be entirely voluntary on the part of the mother.

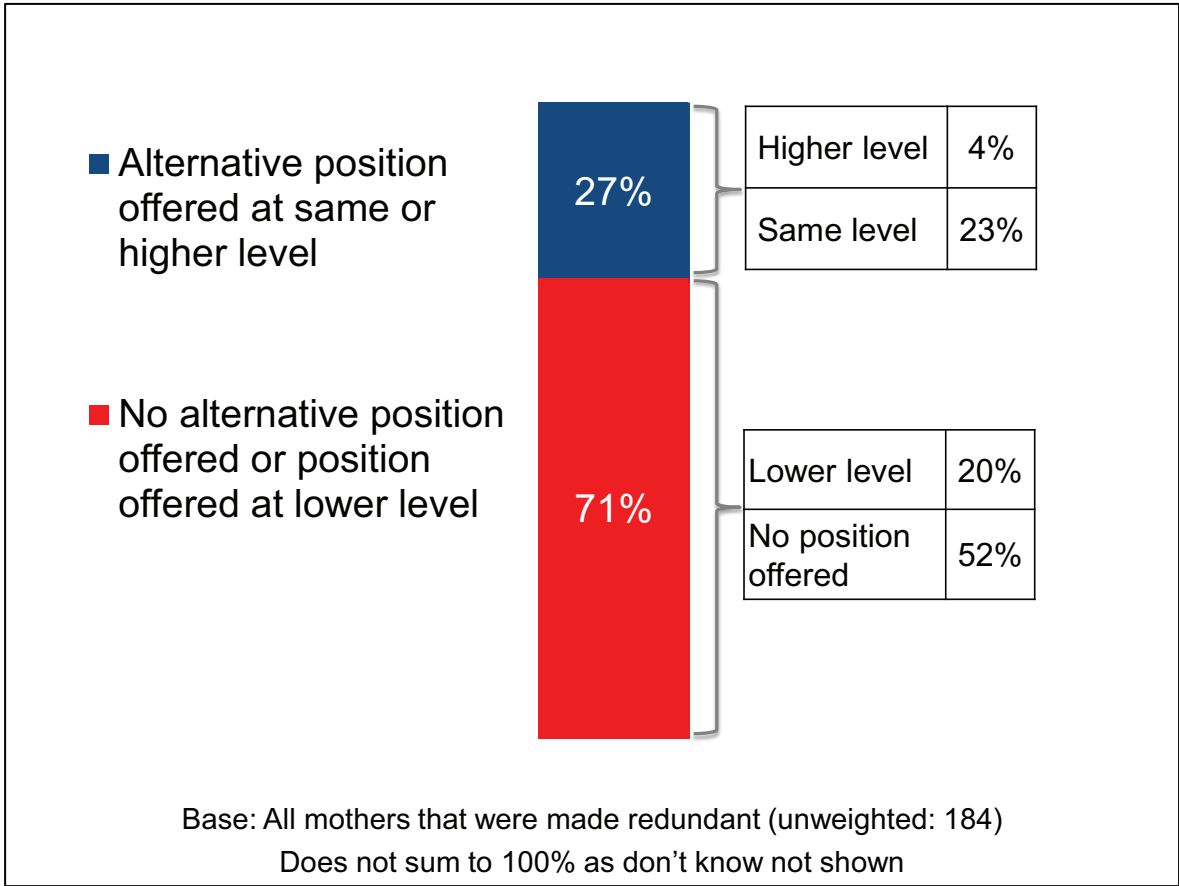
*'The Head of HR said to me: "When we get told to cull headcount what we tend to do is target you maternity crew girls. You might not want to come back so we target you, so do you want redundancy because we'll give you it?"'*

- Mother who reportedly received negative comments, international marketing manager for travel company, earning £40,000-£49,999 a year, aged 40-44

Some mothers made redundant were also offered alternative roles by their employer. Regulation 10 states women on maternity leave affected by redundancy must be informed of any suitable vacancies available up to the end of their employment contract, and be offered such positions over other employees.

Of the mothers made redundant, almost half (48%) said they were offered an alternative position. As Figure 8.2 shows, for 27% of those made redundant this was at the same or a higher level, although in some cases this was at a lower level (20%).

**Figure 8. 2: Alternative positions offered to mothers during redundancy**



Almost three in 10 (27%) were offered a position at the same or a higher level, and seven in 10 (71%) were offered a position at a lower level or no position at all.

Those offered a position at a lower level or no position at all accounted for 4% of all mothers, and were more likely to be mothers in Skilled trades (18%); Administrative and secretarial (6%); or Associate professional and technical (6%) occupations. They were also more likely to be mothers working in the private sector (6%) and in particular, the Transport and Communications (11%) sector.

Mothers who were members of a trade union during their pregnancy; maternity leave; or on return from maternity leave were less likely to be made redundant and offered a position at a lower level or no position at all (2%) compared to those not a member of a trade union (4%).

Of those who were offered a new position (at the same, a higher or a lower level), around two in five (41%) accepted the offer (1% of all mothers).

The follow-up interviews identified a number of cases where mothers had been made redundant and offered new positions without a satisfactory outcome according to the mother.

### Case study: Example of redundancy – a mother being offered an alternative position which she said she did not want, administrator in medium sized finance company, £10,000–£19,999 a year, aged 20–24

*Jyoti* worked for a medium sized company in the Finance sector, performing an administrative role. During her maternity leave the company went through a restructure *Jyoti* says she wasn't made aware of and her role was made redundant. *Jyoti* was offered a role in a different department which she took, however she found she didn't like or understand the new role and felt that no real support was offered. She has since moved to a different employer.

*'When they're closing the different bits of the company down and my role, it would be nice to know what I was going back to. I didn't know what I was going back to until I went in and said this is the day I want to come back.'*

*I could have done with the support because I went back to a new role so I had no idea what I was doing and well after I still didn't have an idea what I was doing so there wasn't the support there with that.'*

## 8.4 Context of redundancy

Two thirds of mothers (67%) made redundant reported that during the same period other employees were made redundant. Mothers who were made redundant at the same time as others were more likely to be:

- Working in Administrative and secretarial occupations (83% in this occupation group who were made redundant); and
- white British (73% of those made redundant compared to 50% of mothers from an ethnic minority who were made redundant).

Three in 10 mothers made redundant reported that no other employees were made redundant in the same period (2% of all mothers). These were most likely to be mothers working in Skilled trades occupations (12% of mothers in this occupational group), the Arts, Culture and Leisure sector (6% of mothers in this sector), and working for small employers of fewer than 50 staff, (3%).

### 8.5 Compulsory redundancies where the mother was the only employee affected

Of the 6% of mothers said they were made redundant, 1% were made redundant in circumstances where mothers:

- did not take voluntary redundancy;
- were not offered an alternative position at the same or a higher level; and
- did not report other staff being made redundant at the same time.

Mothers in this group were more likely to be working in Skilled trades occupations (9%).

## 9. Requests for flexible working

This chapter explores employer responses to requests for flexible working and the issues mothers face in negotiating a change in work patterns. It examines why mothers who would have liked to work flexibly chose not to request it; and the degree to which mothers report receiving less favourable treatment when requests were not approved. This chapter refers to requests for flexible working made at any stage of: pregnancy; maternity leave; and return from maternity leave.

The term ‘flexible working’ describes a type of working arrangement which gives some degree of flexibility on how long; where; when; and at what times employees work. The flexibility can be in terms of working time, working location or the pattern of working.

There have been several changes to flexible working legislation in recent years some of which also have an impact on workplace management of pregnancy and maternity arrangements. These include the introduction of the Work and Families Act 2006, changes to the rules governing carer’s requests for flexible working 2007, Additional Paternity Leave Regulations 2010 and the extension of the right to request flexible working to all employees after 26 weeks of service (June 2014). In addition, Shared Parental Leave was introduced in April 2015 allowing fathers to share up to 50 weeks maternity leave with the child’s mother.

The Fourth Work Life Balance (WLB4) survey (2013)<sup>7</sup> showed that 40% of employers offering any flexible working practices had received at least one request to work flexibly in the previous 12 months, the same proportion as found in the Third Work Life Balance (WLB3) survey in 2007<sup>8</sup>. In addition, as in WLB3, most establishments in the 2013 study (91%) had accepted all requests with only 9% turning any down.

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<sup>7</sup>BIS (2013) Fourth work-life balance employer survey. Available at: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/398557/bis-14-1027-fourth-work-life-balance-employer-survey-2013.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/398557/bis-14-1027-fourth-work-life-balance-employer-survey-2013.pdf) [accessed: 9 December 2015]

<sup>8</sup> Department for Business Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (2007) The Third Work-Life Balance Employer Survey: Main findings. Available at: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/193626/bis-07-1656-the-third-work-life-balance-employer-survey-main-findings.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/193626/bis-07-1656-the-third-work-life-balance-employer-survey-main-findings.pdf) [accessed on: 9 December 2015]

## 9.1 Summary

Two thirds of mothers (68%) reported making a request for at least one flexible working practice. For most types of flexible working, at least three in four mothers had their requests approved. Where requests were approved, more often than not they were approved straightaway: between 33% and 54% depending on the type of flexible working requested. Between 29% and 39% of requests were approved following discussion; and between 12% and 27% were not approved at all.

Some mothers found discussions with their employer about flexible working difficult. Nearly two in five (38%) mothers did not request a type of flexible working they wanted, typically because they did not think it would be approved or because they were worried their employer would view their request negatively. Difficulties can be compounded where flexible working is not actively promoted or discussed in workplaces leaving mothers unsure about what is available or normally approved.

In addition, mothers commonly reported there being 'a price to pay' for having flexible working requests approved, with around half of mothers (51%) who had their flexible working request approved said they experienced unfavourable treatment as a result. Survey findings show that:

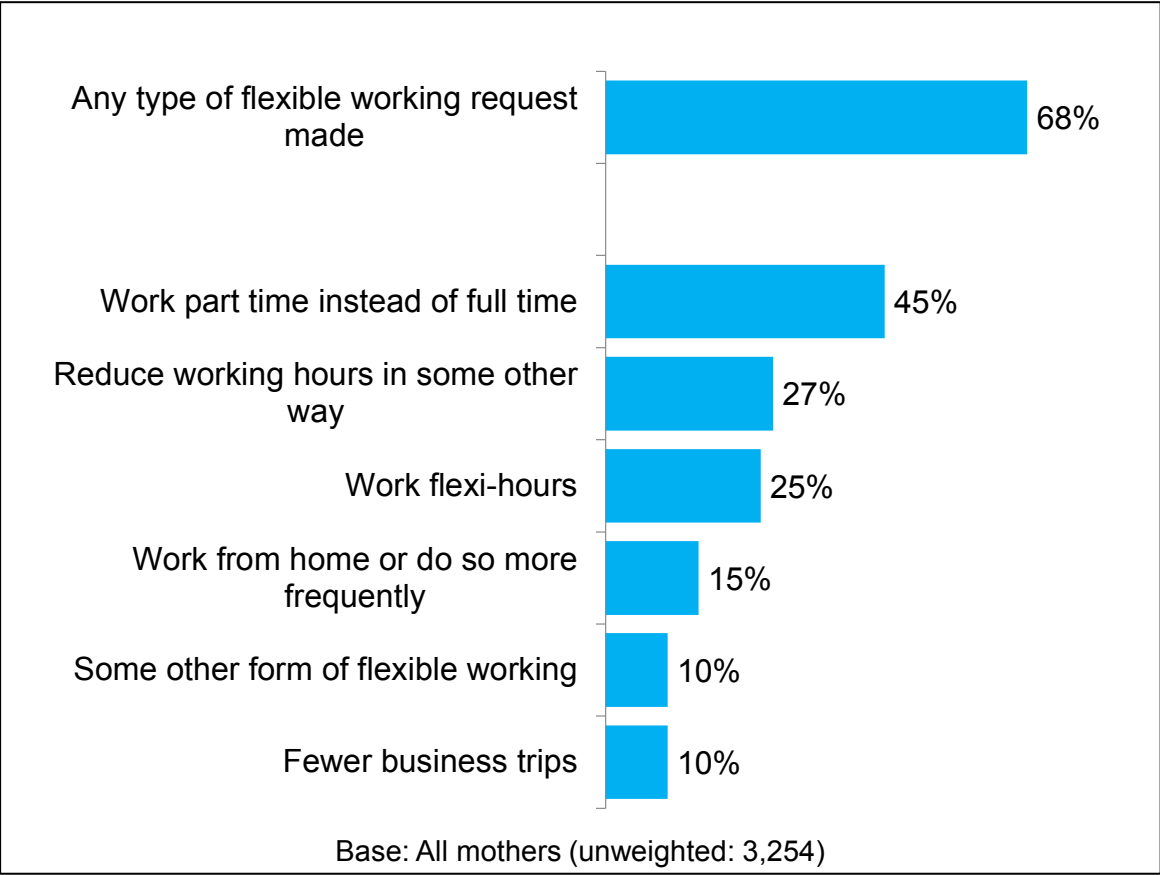
- One in three (32%) mothers said they felt uncomfortable asking for time off or additional flexibility;
- One in three (29%) said they were given fewer opportunities than other colleagues at the same level;
- Around one in six said they received negative comments from their employer or colleagues (16%); felt their opinion was less valued (16%); or were given more 'junior' tasks than previously (15%).

## 9.2 Requests for flexible working

Over two thirds of mothers (68%) made a request for at least one type of flexible working practice. Figure 9.1 shows the most popular flexible working request was to work part-time instead of full-time; requested by almost half of mothers (45%).



**Figure 9. 1: Proportion of mothers making different flexible working requests**

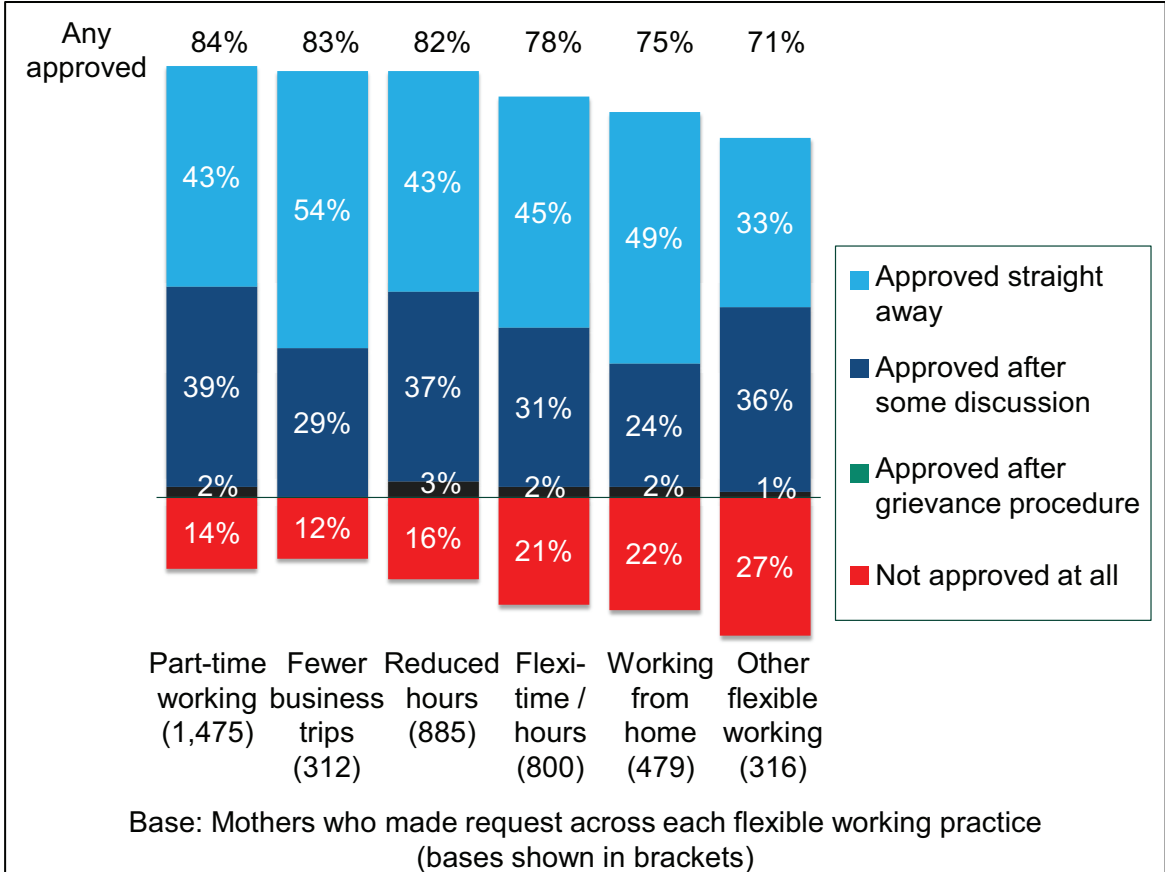


Requesting to work part-time was more common among mothers who were earning over £30,000 a year (53%), aged 25–29 (50%), White British (47%), and married/living with a partner (46%).

After part-time working, reducing hours in some other way (27%) and working flexitime (25%) were the next most common requests. These were requested by a higher proportion of ethnic minority mothers (31% and 34% respectively). Those earning less than £30,000 a year (28%) and mothers married/living with a partner (28%) were more likely to want to reduce their hours.

Most mothers’ requests were approved. As shown in Figure 9.2, for most types of flexible working at least three in four mothers had their requests approved, with the highest proportion for part-time working (84%). It was more common for requests to be approved straightaway than after discussion. Up to 3% had their request approved after going through a grievance procedure. The employers’ survey confirms that most employers said they had granted all of the requests they had received in the last three years (84%).

**Figure 9. 2: Mothers’ perspective: approval of flexible working requests made by mothers returning from maternity leave**



Offering flexibility with hours and working patterns is often a very important factor in deciding whether to return to work following maternity leave, and those who had requests for alternative hours granted while pregnant, or saw colleagues working in this way tended to be more confident they would be able to work a pattern which fitted their needs.

*'I love my job as well when I'm at work and so . . . we came up with the flexible working . . . in terms of the hours we get time to do things like registers, reports and prepare lessons . . . I do the hours but in the evenings . . . it's using my time really efficiently.'*

- Mother who returned to work to full-time hours in a flexible pattern including home working, teacher at further education college, earning £30,000-£39,999, aged 35-39

Around one in 10 (11%) mothers reported having negative experiences relating to requests for flexible working.

For those who did not have their requests approved straightaway, discussions with their employer could be difficult. Agreement could be particularly hard to reach when employer and employees had different preferences, for example when asking to change start or finish times or asking to work from home more frequently. Some of the in-depth interviews with mothers found that negotiations could be lengthy and could leave mothers without a sense of clarity or understanding of their working patterns or which responsibilities remained part of their role on returning to work from maternity leave. This is illustrated in the following case study.

### Case study: Example of a reported negative experience relating to a flexible working request, payroll administrator, earning £10,000–£19,999 a year, aged 35–39

*Rachel* worked as a payroll administrator when pregnant. *Rachel* did not return to the same employer. While on maternity leave *Rachel* said she asked to reduce her hours to three days a week, catering to the department's busiest days and met with her employer to consider her proposal. *Rachel* said that her employer took a while to write back and then proposed four days instead. She asked whether she could alter her hours which her employer initially agreed. At a second meeting, it was reported that her employer gave her a new contract for four days per week for a limited period, after which they expected her to return full-time. She said she had not expected to be presented with a new contract and reported feeling under duress to make a decision as she was due to return to work a month later.

*'They had dragged their heels. I got very stressed about it, just not knowing what I was going back to. They wouldn't give me a definite response and the thought of leaving [my child] and only seeing him for 20 minutes a day, was making me sick with worry. I wasn't given any warning that there would be a new contract to sign or asked if I wanted a representative so it was all a bit strange. They just introduced the contract. I asked to take it home to discuss with my husband. They said it was the final offer and they would hate to see me have to be moved out of the department. That was the alternative, with a cut in pay. I then applied for the other job and was offered it subject to references. I asked work for a reference and they said they only gave them for ex-employees so I resigned...'*

The follow-up interviews found that a few mothers were not clear about where responsibility for negotiating and agreeing alternative working patterns lay within organisations (for example, between line managers and HR). This left some unsure as to who to approach to clarify procedures and discuss these arrangements, which made mothers anxious.

*'I was a bit anxious in case they said no. Originally my sergeant said it would be fine and then when I submitted it, he said: "I'll have to speak to the inspector and it might not get approved." I said to him: "You said to me at the start that it would be fine so*

*I've done all this." It was fine, but he didn't want to say yes in case someone else said no.'*

- Mother who reportedly experienced unclear process for dealing with flexible working requests, police constable, earning £30,000-£39,999 a year, aged 30-34

Some mothers interviewed felt that the decision making process lacked transparency and that they were not involved in or informed about discussions about their role. This made some mothers assume that their employer was trying to force them out.

Mothers reported it was rare for their employer to openly publicise or discuss a flexible working policy or what arrangements have been made previously for other employees, making them uncertain about what was acceptable or possible. Mothers said they had to weigh up their ideal request against what they thought was realistic. Sometimes this meant mothers felt they had to make compromises before they spoke to their employer.

*'You already think there's going to be resentment and "will they accept?" because they will always do it reluctantly. We were short of staff and staff were on maternity leave before I took mine. She wasn't happy at that time and I can understand that.'*

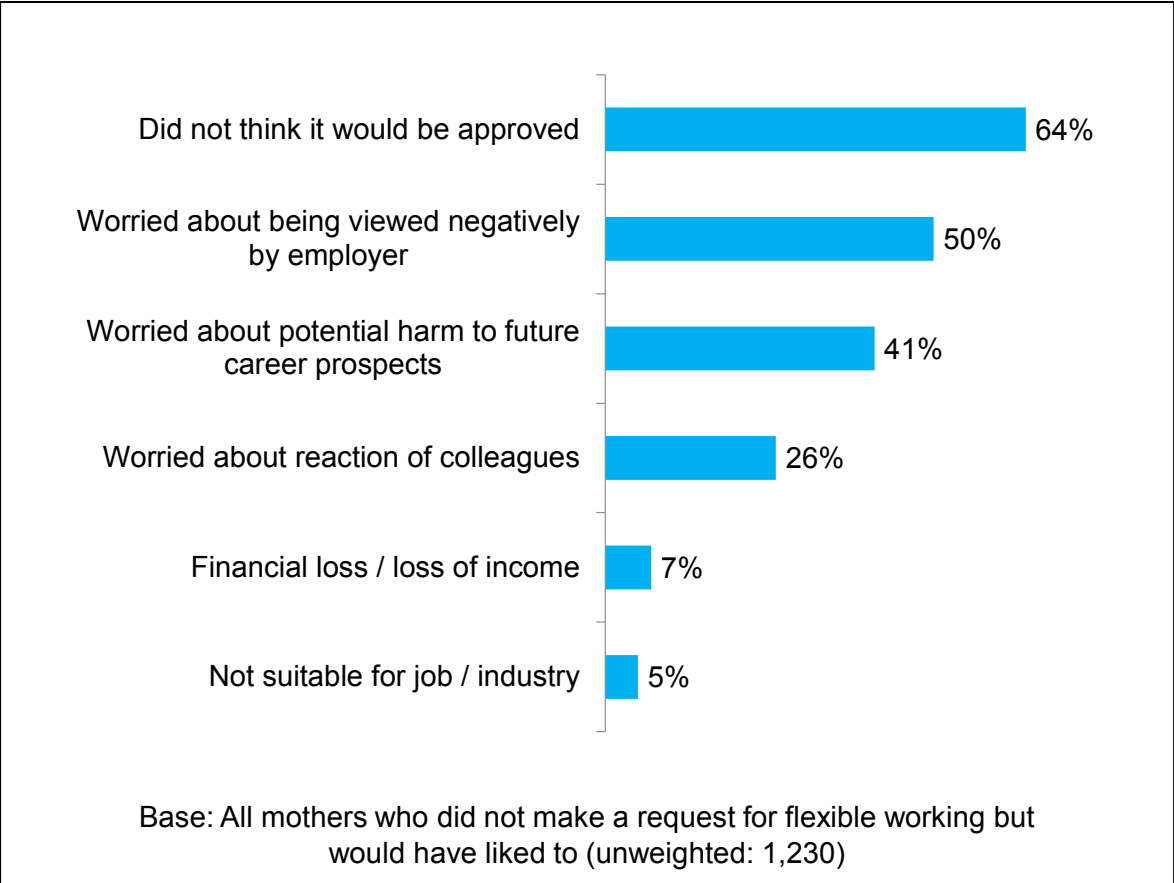
- Mother who compromised request as she thought that it would not be accepted, care worker, earning £5,000-£9,999 a year, aged 35-39

### 9.3 Unmet demand for flexible working and reasons for not making a request

Around two in five mothers (38%) would have liked a flexible working practice that they did not request (including those who did make a request for another type of flexible working).

Mothers who did not make a request despite wanting to were more likely to be working in the Transport and Communication sector (49%), earning £30,000 or more a year (45%), and working full-time (43%).

**Figure 9. 3: Reasons why mothers did not request a flexible working practice they would have liked**



The most common reason mothers gave for not making a request was they thought it would not be approved (64%). This was more likely in Scotland (66%) and England (65%) compared to Wales (51%).

Half of mothers had concerns the request might be viewed negatively by their employer (50%). This was more likely to be reported in England (52%) compared to Scotland (42%) and Wales (36%); and in the private sector (54%). Two in five (41%) had concerns it would damage their future career prospects. This was more likely to be reported by those earning £30,000 or more a year (52%); mothers identifying with a minority ethnic group (49%); and private sector employees (44%).

One in four mothers (26%) did not make a request because they were concerned about their colleagues’ reaction; this was more likely to be reported by mothers in Scotland (29%) and England (26%) compared to Wales (15%).

The employers’ report found that in total, around one in seven employers (14%) had turned down at least one request for flexible working from a pregnant woman or mother returning from maternity leave. The Finance sector was most likely to have turned down at least one request (43%). The main reason for refusing requests was

that it did not fit with operational requirements (46%), while a quarter reported it was not possible to reorganise work among other staff.

#### 9.4 'Price to Pay' for flexible working

As shown previously in Figure 9.2, mothers reporting employers' initial reluctance to agree flexible working requests was fairly common (between 24% and 39% of requests were only approved following discussion). Even when requests were approved mothers said that it could lead to negative experiences. Half of mothers (51%) that had a request for flexible working approved said they experienced negative consequences as a result. In contrast, follow-up interviews with employers found that most employers believed that flexible working did not harm a mother's career prospects or indicate a change in attitude or a mother having less ambition.

The most common negative experiences from the mother's perspective were:

- feeling uncomfortable about asking for time off or additional flexibility (32%);
- receiving fewer opportunities than other colleagues at the same level (29%);
- receiving negative comments from their employer or colleagues (16%);
- feeling that their opinion was less valued (16%); and
- being given more junior tasks than previously (15%).

The follow-up interviews showed that it was not uncommon among mothers interviewed to feel that employers or managers made it clear (both directly and indirectly) that flexible working was an inconvenience to them. In addition, qualitative evidence suggests that mothers reported being made to feel guilty or that they were letting the team down, often due to under-resourced teams. Some mothers felt flexible working was perceived by employers to indicate they had no desire to progress their careers. Some mothers felt it was used as a reason for an effective demotion or that their employer treated them as more junior than previously.

In the follow-up interviews some mothers felt, even when flexible work requests had been accepted, that they had to make sacrifices or compromises. Some mothers were comfortable with this as they valued additional flexibility. Some mothers' perceived that an uncomfortable working environment may be interpreted as a 'price to pay' for them working flexibly. Mothers reported that they struggled to maintain a good work-life balance after reducing their hours or moving from a full-time to a part-time role. Several mentioned they found it difficult to fit work in to the reduced working time, and felt stressed, tired, or frantic and 'on the go' constantly.

*'I have a few female colleagues in the department who had previously worked part-time. Their children are older and they have returned and they told me about their*

*experiences, that it was more frantic working part-time. I felt people have been fairly positive. My line manager's wife works three days per week as well.'*

– Secondary school teacher, earning £30,000-£39,999 a year, aged 35-39

Many mothers in the follow-up interviews reported working harder to 'prove' themselves or demonstrate they could cope with the flexibility, especially if they worked from home or had moved into a part-time role. For example, a number mentioned they felt that they were doing more work part-time than they might have in the equivalent period if they had worked full-time, and had to work harder on 'working from home' days.

Some interviewees felt guilty or self-conscious when, for example, they were first to leave the office due to agreeing new start and finish times; working part-time; or requesting specific shift patterns (for example, due to morning sickness).

Mothers reported they sometimes felt 'kept out of the loop' or not always fully informed and had to spend time catching up on developments. This led to some mothers feeling undervalued.

Some mothers experienced negative comments from other colleagues when they had reduced their hours and perceived that flexible working was neither common nor well understood in their workplace. Mothers felt this might cause resentment so that colleagues were less likely to involve them in changes or developments that occurred in their absence.

### Case study: Example of a mother feeling a 'price to pay' for working flexibly, engineering project manager based at client site, earning £30,000-£39,999 a year, aged 25-29

*Sabah* was a project manager in a medium size private sector employer working for the energy industry. *Sabah* reported that her employer did not allow her to attend antenatal classes in work time. *Sabah* felt that her employer's perspective was that they did not want her to return to work.

When she was in discussions with her employer about returning from maternity leave, she submitted a request to change her working hours and although her employer accepted her flexible working request, she felt guilty because she believed her employer felt she had not prioritised work sufficiently.

*'During the pregnancy I hadn't felt that they wanted me to come back and then when I tried to come back they were knocking me down. They said I was being over-protective or worrying too much and that in a couple of months I'd be "over it" and I'd be back working five days a week anyway. We're two years on and I've still not gone back five days a week. It made me feel that they were hard done by. That they'd invested in me and I was now off throwing it in their face. . It did not make me feel very good at all.'*

## 10. Breastfeeding

This chapter explores the impact of returning to work on mothers' decisions to continue or stop breastfeeding and their discussions with employers on their needs as a breastfeeding mother.

There is no explicit statutory protection for a woman's right to breastfeeding breaks under UK law, although less favourable treatment of women who breastfeed may amount to sex discrimination. Breastfeeding mothers have the same legal rights in the workplace as pregnant women, that is, the opportunity and place to rest. The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 states that these facilities should be conveniently situated in relation to sanitary facilities and, where necessary, include the facility to lie down. These 'rest facilities' are very likely to also be a suitable place for breastfeeding or expressing. Although private, a toilet is never a suitable place in which to breastfeed a baby or express milk.

Although not enshrined in law, the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and the European Commission recommend that employers should provide: access to a private room where women can breastfeed or express breast milk; use of secure, clean refrigerators for storing expressed breast milk while at work; and facilities for washing, sterilising and storing receptacles.

Whereas employers are legally obliged to regularly review general workplace risks, there is no legal requirement to conduct a specific, separate risk assessment for an employee returning from maternity leave who has informed her employer she is breastfeeding.

### 10.1 Summary

Returning to work influences mothers' decision to stop breastfeeding. One in five mothers (19%) that had stopped breastfeeding (whether before or after a return from maternity leave) said returning to work influenced their decision. Just over half of these mothers (54%) would have liked to breastfeed longer. For three quarters of mothers who said returning to work had influenced their decision to stop this was because expressing milk or breastfeeding at work was difficult; because they assumed it would be difficult; or because they assumed they had to stop or were unsure how to continue.

Most mothers did not discuss expressing milk or breastfeeding with their employer and did not know whether facilities existed in their workplace. Around three in 10 mothers (29%) were aware their employers had facilities for expressing milk or breastfeeding. Around one in five mothers (22%) who continued breastfeeding once they returned to work or stopped around the time of their return had spoken to their employer or line manager about the possibility of expressing milk or breastfeeding at work. Generally these conversations resulted in positive or neutral outcomes. Positive or neutral outcomes from discussions include: their employer said they could provide the facilities and/or breaks required to express milk/breastfeed; the employer



said mothers could express milk/breastfeed but they would not provide special facilities to do so; the employer said they'd consider the request; the employer said the mother could express milk/breastfeed in their lunch break; and the employer changed working hours to accommodate a request to express milk/breastfeed. 2% received a negative outcome such as the employer stating they could not allow expressing milk or breastfeeding due to health and safety grounds. A further 11% decided not to raise the issue with employers as they expected a negative response.

Around three in five breastfeeding mothers (59%) felt their needs were supported willingly by their employer. One in five mothers who continued breastfeeding once they had returned to work (21%) did not feel their needs as a breastfeeding mother were supported willingly by their employer.

## 10.2 Prevalence of breastfeeding at work

Around one in five mothers (22%) who returned to work from maternity leave continued breastfeeding. Of these, three in 10 expressed milk or breastfed at work, while the remainder (70%) breastfed their baby outside working hours. Mothers who were over the age of 40 (28%), in professional occupations (28%), working in the Education sector (28%), and earning over £30,000 a year (27%) compared with the average (22%) were more likely to continue to breastfeed after returning to work from maternity leave.

## 10.3 The influence of returning to work on stopping breastfeeding

While 69% of mothers had stopped breastfeeding some time before they returned to work or had never breastfed, one in 10 stopped just before or around the time they returned. One in five mothers earning over £60,000 a year (19%) stopped breastfeeding around the time they returned to work from maternity leave. Those working in the Hotels and Restaurants sector (19%) and agency workers (18%) were also more likely to stop breastfeeding at this time.

One in five mothers (19%) that stopped breastfeeding (whether before or after a return to work) stated that returning to work after maternity leave had influenced their decision. Just over half of these mothers (54%) would have liked to breastfeed longer. This equates to 6% of all mothers who would have liked to breastfeed for longer but who stopped, at least in part, because of work.

**Case study: Example of a mother stopping breastfeeding before return to work as she thought her manager would not be accommodating, sales/customer service in large office, earning £10,000–£19,999 a year, aged 30–34**

*Sian* worked in a Sales and customer service occupation for a large company in the Manufacturing sector. She said she had a poor experience throughout her pregnancy due to longstanding problems with her line manager. *Sian* stopped breastfeeding her

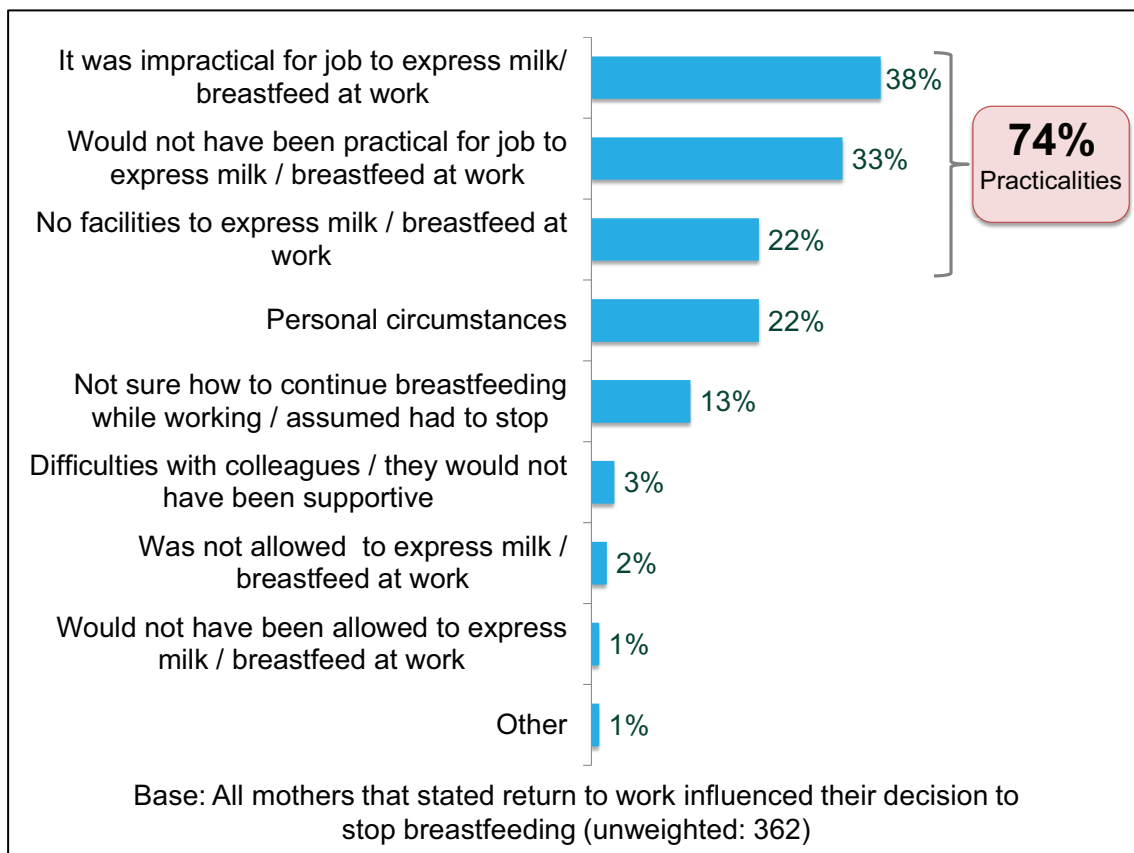
baby because she didn't think it would be allowed once she returned to work from maternity leave, which she planned to do despite her unhappiness there.

*'It was just the pressure of breastfeeding. I don't think [line manager] would have allowed me if she wouldn't let me have important scan appointments, to go out and have a feed. I haven't experienced [other mums breastfeeding in workplace] in my whole working life. I think because of the call centre, the fact you have schedules to fit around, busy and quiet times, I don't know how [line manager] would have accommodated being able to do feeds.'*

### 10.4 Reasons for returning to work influencing a decision to stop breastfeeding

Of the mothers reporting that returning to work from maternity leave influenced their decision to stop breastfeeding, 74% said it was either impractical to express milk or breastfeed at work; thought it would be impractical; or said there were no facilities to do so at work.

**Figure 10. 1: Reasons mothers gave for work influencing their decision to stop breastfeeding or expressing milk**



In comparison, the employers' survey found just over half of employers (53%) had some form of facility or opportunity for mothers to express milk or breastfeed. Just

over two in five employers (43%) had a private room with suitable facilities. Employers also mentioned having a toilet or sick room available (8%) (which HSE guidance considers unsuitable) and storage facilities for breast milk (8%). A low proportion of employers (2%) mentioned flexible breaks were available to allow mothers to breastfeed or express milk. Overall, just over two in five employers (42%) said that there were no facilities or opportunities available for mothers to express milk or breastfeed at work.

The follow-up interviews revealed that mothers' concerns about the practicalities of breastfeeding ranged from working long hours; travelling overseas; or the difficulty of taking breaks to express milk.

Around one in eight mothers (13%) reported they weren't sure how to continue breastfeeding after returning to work from maternity leave or simply assumed they had to stop. In the follow-up interviews, some mothers explained that they assumed they had to stop before returning to work as this was 'what you do'. They often didn't explore options to continue with their employer or anyone else.

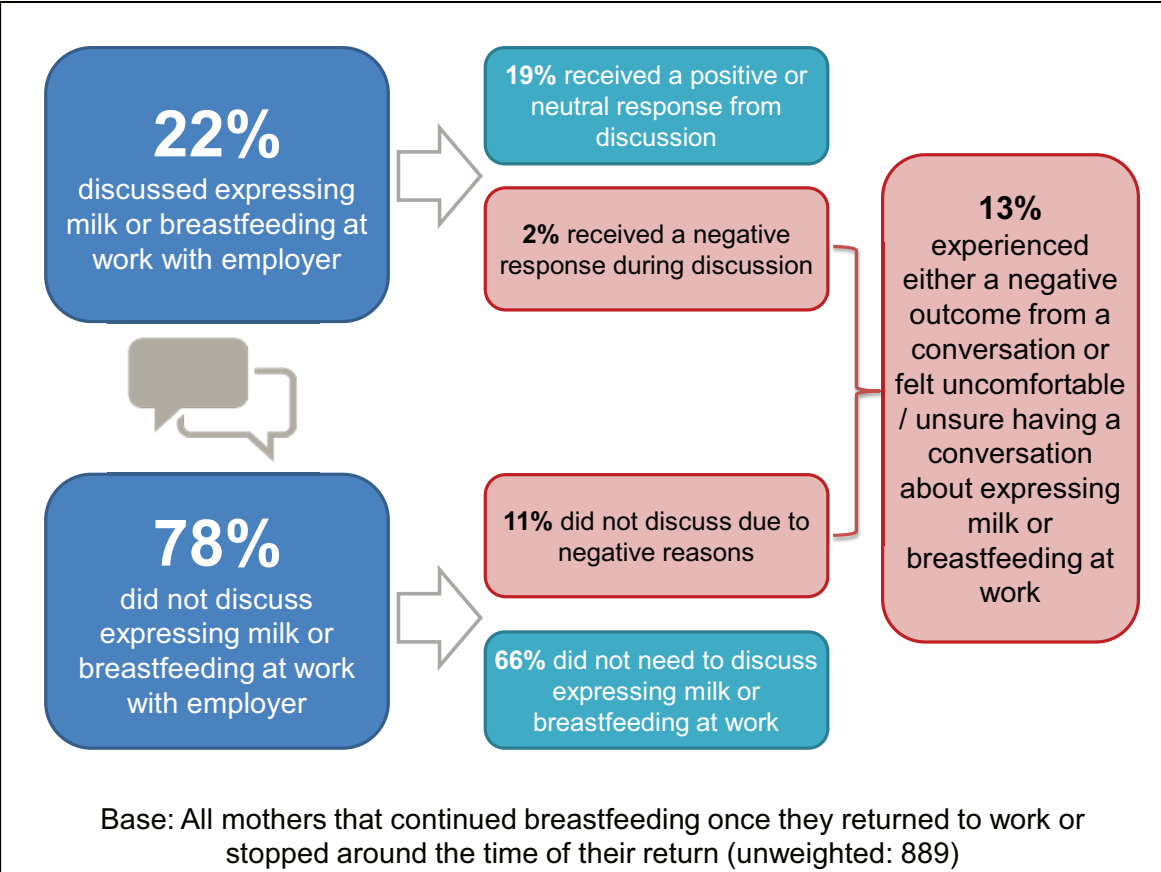
Among mothers who breastfed for any length of time and worked since the birth of their baby, around three in 10 (29%) were aware facilities for expressing milk or breastfeeding were available at their workplace.

## 10.5 Communication with employer around breastfeeding

Around one in five mothers (22%) who continued breastfeeding once they returned to work or stopped around the time of their return from maternity leave spoke to their employer or line manager about expressing milk or breastfeeding at work. The outcomes of most of these discussions were positive (see Figure 10.2). Where mothers had chosen not to discuss expressing milk or breastfeeding with their employer, this was generally because they did not need to (for example because they were planning to breastfeed outside of work hours only). However, around one in 10 of these mothers (11%) reported reasons for not having this conversation. These included:

- being too embarrassed to raise it (6%)
- it not being practical at work (4%)
- assuming their employer would decline request due to the facilities (2%) or breaks required (1%), and
- concerns over negative attitudes of colleagues (1%).

**Figure 10. 2: Outcomes of discussion with employer and reasons for not raising breastfeeding with employer**



Around one in seven mothers (13%) who continued to breastfeed once they returned to work or stopped around the time of their return from maternity leave experienced either a negative outcome from a conversation with their employer; or felt uncomfortable or unsure about having the conversation on expressing milk / breastfeeding at work.

Most outcomes from discussions with employers were positive or neutral. However, 2% of those that continued to breastfeed once they returned to work or stopped around the time of their return from maternity leave, reported negative outcomes from a discussion with their employer. For example, the employer:

- could not allow expressing milk or breastfeeding due to health and safety grounds (1%)
- was unsupportive or unhelpful (1%)
- said that they could not allow expressing milk or breastfeeding because of the extra breaks this would entail (less than 1%), and

- said that expressing milk or breastfeeding at work was incompatible with their job role (less than 1%).

Follow-up interviews with mothers suggest that positive responses from employers were often associated with mothers feeling that their employers considered breastfeeding to be a normal activity. Mothers were also more likely to report positive responses where they felt their employers were aware of required adjustments to working hours or access to facilities, particularly where this was incorporated into the standard maternity policy. Negative responses were associated with accounts of employers regarding employees who became pregnant as a problem, and employers' reluctance to allow what was perceived as 'special treatment'.

### Case study: Example of positive experience of employer support for breastfeeding, senior manager at international bank, earning £90,000–£99,999 a year, aged 30–34

*Reema* was a highly paid Vice President of a large investment bank. She was recruited when she was pregnant with her second child, so was not entitled to maternity pay, and she took a short maternity leave, returning to work when her baby was five months old. Her employer fully supported her expressing milk at work. They provided a private room, a fridge to store her milk, and two half hour breaks a day. *Reema* felt apologetic about interrupting her work but her colleagues were supportive. With her employer's support, *Reema* continued to express milk at work until her baby was nine months old. At the time of interview she was on maternity leave from the same company with her third child.

*'I hired one of those industrial-sized maternity pumps and basically I took it to work with me every day. [The employer] were absolutely fine with me. I would go off for about an hour a day, half an hour mid-morning and half an hour mid-afternoon. I had this, they call it a first aid room but nobody used it, it had a lock on the door so I could lock it and keep privacy. There was a fridge in there for me to be able to put the milk in. And it was all very easy to arrange. Basically, one of the PAs arranged it for me, I just had to fill in a form that went to HR, no questions about it at all, the team were just: "Yes, go ahead and do it." I remember the first few days I felt I had to excuse myself but after a few days, they were like: "Honestly, just go and do it, don't worry about it."*

### Case study: Example of a mother feeling unsupported by her employers in relation to breastfeeding, engineering project manager based at client site, earning £30,000–£39,999 a year, aged 25–29

*Sabah* was a project manager in a medium-sized private sector employer in the energy industry. During pregnancy she said she experienced problems relating to management of risks, and said she was made to feel like she was inconveniencing her employer by becoming pregnant and taking maternity leave. When she discussed

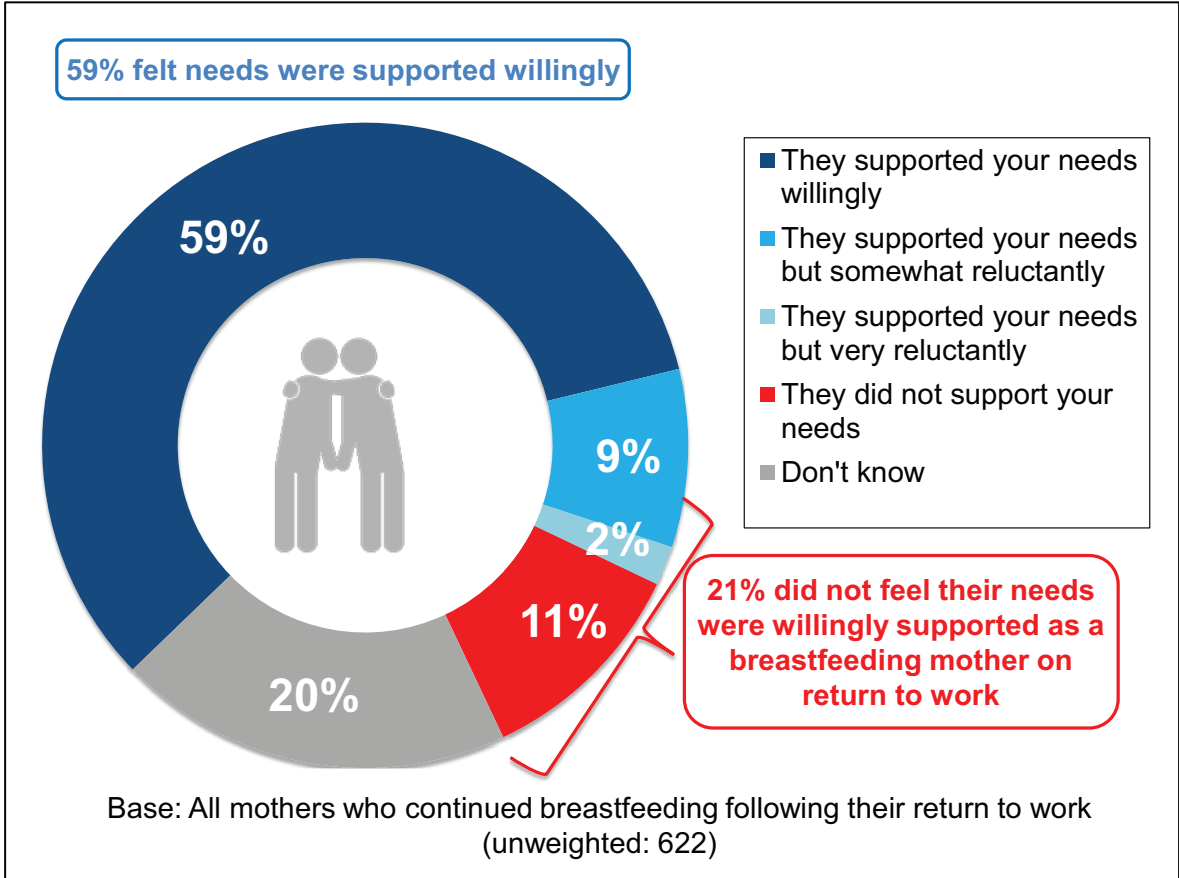
arrangements for returning to work, she says her employer encouraged her to stop breastfeeding, and refused to offer any facilities for her to express or store milk.

*'When I had the conversation about returning to work, the fact that [my child] was breastfed was heavily frowned upon because she was over a year old...they didn't have any facilities, and when I suggested that I might need to express: "Well that's what the toilets are for." My options were the car or the toilet.'*

### 10.6 Employer support

Around six in 10 mothers (59%) who continued to breastfeed after returning to work from maternity leave felt their needs as a breastfeeding mother were supported willingly by their employer. Around one in 10 (11%) felt supported reluctantly; and around one in 10 (11%) felt they were not supported at all.

**Figure 10. 3: Mothers' perceptions of employer support for breastfeeding**



The follow-up interviews gave some insight into what mothers meant by being supported 'willingly': they appreciated a well-informed, matter-of-fact response from

their employer that normalised their desire to work and breastfeed (as in the case study of *Reema* above), and the proactive offer of breaks to express milk and an appropriate private space to do so.

*'They said to me if I needed to express [milk] they would give me 20 minutes that wouldn't be taken out of my lunch break – a separate break. They didn't ever say to me that they couldn't make those allowances, and didn't put any obstacles in my way, and were fine with it.'*

- Mother whose employer supported her expressing milk at work, hotel receptionist for large chain, earning £3,000-£4,999 a year, aged 20-24

*'And if I'd needed to [express milk at work] they would have made available space for me to breastfeed or pump.'*

- Mother whose employer supported her expressing milk at work, teacher at sixth form college, earning £30,000-£39,999 a year, aged 30-34

Almost a quarter (23%) of those who continued to breastfeed following a return from maternity leave reported problems or difficulties (equating to 1% of all mothers). This increased to almost two in five of those in working for employers with 50 or more employees (39%); and those working in the Health and Social Care sector (37%)\*.

Of mothers experiencing difficulties in breastfeeding or expressing milk at work, the problems most commonly related to employers either being reluctant to or not providing at all, the necessary facilities (49%) or breaks (19%)\*.

# 11. Raising concerns and complaints

This chapter covers raising complaints and concerns, including the prevalence of women raising issues with their employer, outcomes of raising issues and complaints and barriers to raising issues with employers.

As of 29 July 2013 any claim submitted to the Employment Tribunal or Employment Appeal Tribunal (EAT) will have to be accompanied by a fee (unless eligible for fee remission). To lodge their claim, employees have to pay a fee of either £160 (for basic claims) or £250 (for most other claims, such as unfair dismissal or discrimination). They will then have to pay a further fee of either £230 or £950 to progress to a hearing.

Employers are not exempt from the new fee structure and have to pay certain fees such as £160 to issue a counter claim; and £400 to lodge an appeal with the EAT (plus a further fee of £1,200 to proceed to an EAT hearing).

It is good practice for employers to encourage early communication and try to resolve problems and concerns without going through a grievance procedure, if the employee agrees. If the employee does not agree, then employers should investigate the grievance using the relevant Acas guide.<sup>9</sup> A written procedure can help clarify the process and help to ensure that employees are aware of their rights. For tribunal claims lodged on or after 6 May 2014, those intending to lodge an employment tribunal claim must notify Acas, who will offer the opportunity to use Early Conciliation to settle the workplace dispute without going to court.

## 11.1 Summary

Around one in five mothers (22%) reported raising issues regarding problems they experienced while pregnant; on maternity leave; or after returning to work following maternity leave.

The survey of employers found 5% of employers with experience of a pregnant employee at their workplace or a mother returning following maternity leave in the

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<sup>9</sup>Available at: <http://www.acas.org.uk/media/pdf/l/g/Discipline-and-grievances-Acas-guide.pdf> [accessed: 11 January 2015]



last three years had received a formal complaint relating to either pregnancy or maternity discrimination.

The survey of mothers does not ask employee mothers about the outcome following raising any issues formally or informally with their employer. Findings from the survey of employers, however, show that where employers had received a formal complaint, the most common outcome was that the complaint was withdrawn (28%). In follow-up interviews some mothers felt informal complaints were not resolved satisfactorily. Where they had raised an issue informally with their line manager, mothers said that nothing was done; action was taken only very slowly; reluctantly; or after repeated requests.

Some mothers sought the advice or support of external organisations, including 4% who contacted Acas; 2% the Citizens Advice Bureau; and 2% a trade union. Mothers said their employers responded more positively after they informed them they had contacted an external organisation.

1%\* of mothers had lodged a complaint with the Employment Tribunal. The detail and outcome of these complaints is not reported on in further detail due to a low number of mothers reporting this.

Many mothers reporting they had negative or possibly discriminatory experiences did not raise this with their employer (76% of mothers who had a negative or possibly discriminatory experience did not raise this with their employer or line manager).

## 11.2 Prevalence of mothers raising issues

22% of all mothers reported raising an issue either formally or informally whilst pregnant; on maternity leave; or on return to work from maternity leave. This includes 18% of mothers reporting an issue raised it with their manager; 16% raised it with other work colleagues; 14% who raised it with their employer; 5% of mothers raised an issue with a workplace trade union representative and 2% who went through an internal grievance procedure. In addition, less than one in ten mothers (8%) complained to their employer in response receiving negative comments, feeling humiliated or belittled, or experiencing other intimidating or offensive activity.

Raising issues was less common in Wales (17%) compared to England (23%) and Scotland (22%). Mothers earning at least £60,000 a year (32%) and those who had a long-term physical or mental health condition (30%) were more likely to report raising issues.

Just over a quarter (28%) of those who said they experienced any type of negative or possibly discriminatory experience reported raising issues.

In the follow-up interviews with employers, employers felt that they encouraged employees to raise issues or complaints. They described structured complaints procedures, usually starting with an informal discussion between the employee and their line manager (unless the complaint related to the line manager). Most

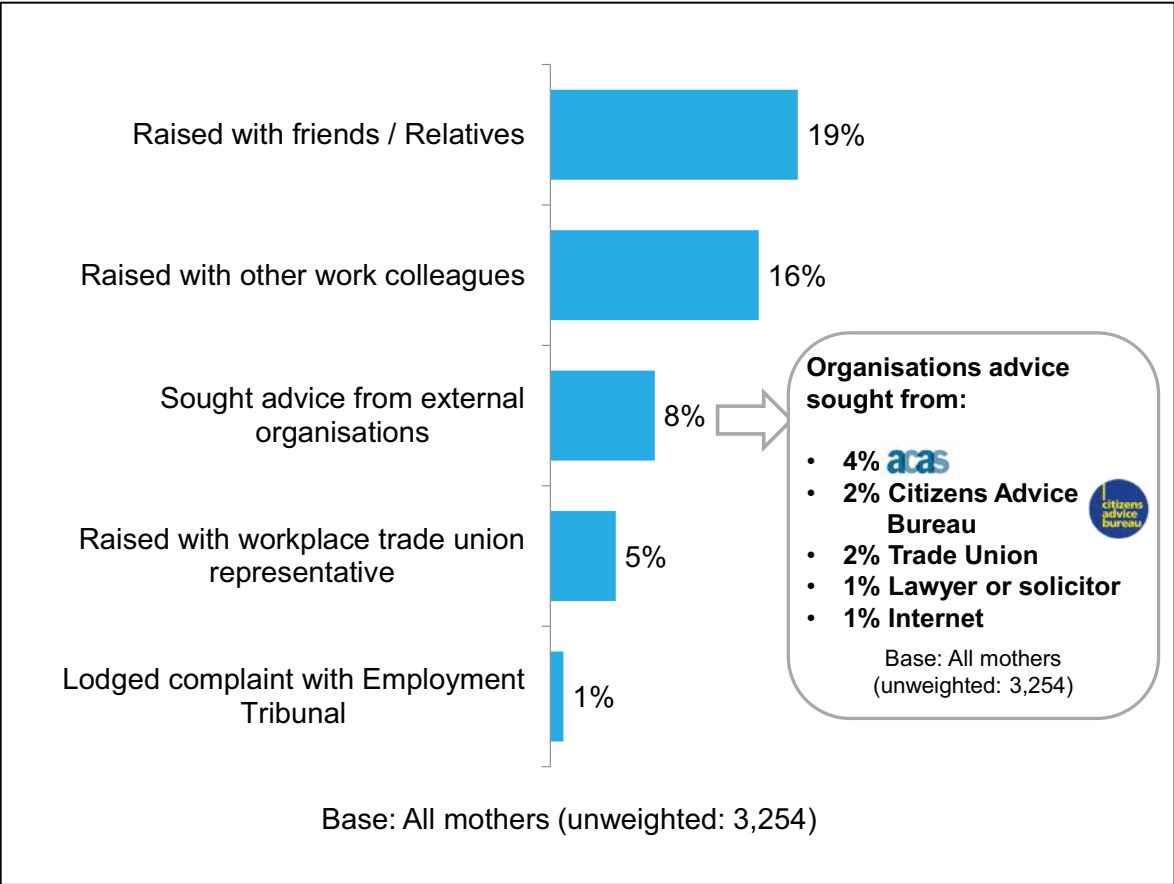
employers felt the culture of their workplace facilitated honest communication about problems, saying that managers or those responsible for HR had an 'open door' policy for complaints, and that employees could easily access their complaints procedure (for example, in a staff handbook or on an intranet).

Mothers also raised issues through other informal channels; around one in five mothers (19%) discussed their concerns with their friends or relatives, while around one in 12 mothers (8%) sought advice from an external organisation; most often Acas (4% of mothers). Around two fifths (39%) of those who contacted an external organisation sought guidance on the strength of their case for making a claim at an employment tribunal.

Most often mothers sought advice regarding issues they experienced from Acas (4%); the Citizens Advice Bureau (2%); a trade union (2%); a lawyer or solicitor (1%); or found information on the internet (1%). Where mothers told their employers they had sought advice from an external organisation, this often triggered action from the employer to resolve the issue.

The follow-up interviews revealed that mothers did not think it appropriate to raise concerns about negative comments that could be considered workplace 'banter'. Women said these comments had a negative impact on them but felt that a complaint might be perceived as overreacting or result in further negative comments.

**Figure 11. 1: Actions taken by mothers as a result of issues experienced**



**11.3 Outcomes of raising issues**

Findings from the survey of employers show that where employers had received a formal complaint, the most common outcome was that the complaint was withdrawn (28%). Where a complaint was decided internally, it was more common for it be upheld (15%) than for it to be dismissed (9%). Almost three in 10 (28%) said the complaint had been resolved, though the employer did not indicate in whose favour or by what means.

Qualitative evidence suggests that among mothers interviewed who reported raising issues informally; many felt complaints were not resolved satisfactorily. Some reported that where they had raised an issue informally with their line manager, nothing was done; action was taken only very slowly; reluctantly; or after repeated requests or promises of action did not materialise.

## Case study: Example of where mother reported being victimised following attempt to escalate concerns, supermarket customer assistant, earning £5,000–£9,999 a year, aged 20–24

*Lara* was a customer assistant who worked shifts at a small branch of a large supermarket. *Lara* claimed that her manager objected to her taking time off work to go to her antenatal appointments until she got confirmation from Acas that she had the right to do so.

*Lara* suffered from severe morning sickness and asked to change her shifts from starting at 5.30am to 9am to accommodate this; however not all her shifts were changed and she was reportedly told she was not doing her job properly.

On returning to work, *Lara* said she continued to encounter problems, for example when her child was sick and not allowed to go to nursery, she said that her manager refused to let her change her shifts around and instead made her take this time as sick leave, resulting in disciplinary action for poor attendance. *Lara* made a complaint about how the manager had treated her, and said that it resulted in negative consequences.

*'I wrote a complaint about this manager. I sent an email to his manager who then forwarded the email [back] to my manager who got me in the office and had a go at me for trying to get him told off by his boss, and said it was a hate campaign against him, and I ended up getting a disciplinary for it rather than anything being sorted...[Nothing happened as a result]: I got told off and he got nothing ... I never did [complain] again because I got a negative result the first time.'*

### 11.4 Barriers to raising issues

Many mothers said they had negative experiences but did not raise it with their employers. As discussed in Chapter 2, 77% reported a negative or possibly discriminatory experience of some form; however, only 28% of these mothers raised this with their employer, including 3% who went through their employer's internal grievance procedure.

Some mothers had considered going through their employer's internal grievance procedure (5% of all mothers) or lodging complaint with the employment tribunal (4% of all mothers) but had not done so.

Around one in four mothers (27%)\* who considered but chose not to go through their employer's internal grievance procedure said the prospect was too daunting. Other reasons for deciding not to go through an internal grievance procedure included that:

- the issue had been resolved (24%)\*;

- not wanting to 'get into trouble at work' (13%)\*
- not wanting to damage future employment prospects (9%)\*
- getting another job (8%)\*
- not feeling they had a good enough case (8%)\*
- being too busy with their baby or wanting to focus on their pregnancy or maternity leave (7%)\*, and
- being afraid of losing their job (6%)\*.

For over a fifth (22%)\* of mothers the situation was resolved before it got to the stage of going through an employment tribunal. Fewer than one in seven mothers (15%) who had raised issues and considered lodging a complaint with an employment tribunal decided not to lodge a complaint. They said this was because it was too daunting\*.

Other reasons for deciding not to go to a tribunal included mothers being too busy with their baby or wanting to focus on pregnancy or maternity leave (12%)\*, not wanting to 'get into trouble at work' (10%)\*, feeling they did not have a good enough case (9%)\*, and being afraid of losing their job (9%)\*.

Further reasons for choosing not to lodge a complaint with an employment tribunal include 7%\* got another job; 5%\* could not afford the fees; 3%\* left without another job to go to and the same proportion were made redundant.

Mothers chose not to make complaints or take more formal action when they experienced negative or possibly discriminatory treatment from employers for a variety of reasons, as detailed in the follow-up interviews:

- Fear of creating a bad feeling with their colleagues or employer.

It was felt in some instances that to make a complaint would create 'bad feeling' at work; drawing unwelcome attention to their 'difference' as a pregnant woman or new mother; and potentially distancing themselves from colleagues by questioning their employer. Mothers were very conscious of the tension between protecting relationships at work and asserting their rights, especially in smaller businesses.

- Fear of adverse consequences

In the follow up interviews some mothers said that they were worried about the consequences of complaining and so chose not to. For example, in a few instances mothers worried that complaining would lead to dismissal and the consequent loss of maternity pay. This was particularly the case if they were on fixed term contracts or were low skilled. Mothers in high-skilled jobs were less likely to worry about

dismissal but more likely to worry about their future employment prospects or being labelled a 'troublemaker' because of making a complaint.

*'I have thought about whether there is anything I can do about my feeling that I haven't progressed as I perhaps should've or could've done, but it's quite difficult to prove, and also there's the feeling that if you do try to get a union involved or anything like that then my career could suffer.'*

- Mother who did not raise complaint, assistant producer at broadcaster, earning £20,000–£29,000 a year, aged 40–44.
  - Stress and tiredness

Many mothers talked about the need to avoid unnecessary stress when pregnant or on maternity leave, for their own and their baby's wellbeing.

- A belief that nothing will change

Some mothers thought there was no point in raising a concern because they believed that the nature of their job meant that nothing would change or that the employer would fail to respond. Others felt it would be difficult to prove their claim and so it was not, on balance, worth the risk of trying.

- A perceived lack of information about rights

Some mothers, especially younger mothers aged under 25 in low paid/low skilled roles, felt unable to make a complaint because they lacked knowledge about their maternity rights and did not know where to look for information. One mother mentioned they had to ask to find out about their company maternity policy.

*'I find it astonishing that a company doesn't share the maternity policy with you unless you ask for it... You shouldn't have to go to someone to see it, because then you're putting your cards on the table that you're pregnant or thinking of it... It reminded me the HR team work for the company not for the individuals.'*

- Mother who did not raise complaint, public relations director for large hospitality organisation, earning £100,000 or more a year, aged 35–39

Some mothers suggested for pregnant workers to have a structured meeting with their employer to talk through the company maternity policy, their rights and how to raise concerns.

- Lack of clear complaints procedure.

For some mothers, they reported a lack of a clear complaints procedure, particularly where they felt it was treatment by the line manager causing the issue. Some mothers working in larger organisations often reported difficulties in complaining even

if there was an HR department, because they said that procedures were not transparent.

*'I had to email a contact in HR from my contact list from a previous query and then I spoke to her and she told me to speak to somebody else... It wasn't clear, they say contact HR but you don't have a name or number.'*

– Mother who tried to raise complaint, account manager, earning £30,000–£39,999 a year, aged 30–34

- Feeling Guilty

Several mothers referred to feeling guilty about the impact of their pregnancy on their employer, particularly if they had a short length service when they became pregnant. This could impact on some mothers' decision not to pursue a complaint.

- Financial cost of pursuing a complaint

A few mothers investigated legal action against their employer, but said that they were put off by the cost of paying legal and employment tribunal fees. Some mothers contacted external organisations for advice on gaining financial support to pursue an employment tribunal claim against their employer (12% of all those seeking out external advice had done so in relation to this). Under half of mothers that sought advice regarding financial support to pursue an employment tribunal claim (46%)\* reported that they were not advised that employment tribunal fees can be reduced or removed entirely in certain circumstances.

## 12. Looking for work while pregnant or as a mother of a young child

This chapter explores the experiences of women who attended job interviews either while pregnant or following the birth of their child. It explores discussions with employers and mothers views on how employers' awareness of their pregnancy or having a young child affected their chances of success.

An employer is legally required when making recruitment decisions not to treat a woman unfavourably because she is pregnant, or might become pregnant. If an employer asks an applicant questions about pregnancy or her plans to start a family, and she is not appointed to a post, an employment tribunal may conclude that discrimination has occurred.

Pregnancy and maternity discrimination is unlawful under the Equality Act 2010. Any unfavourable treatment because of pregnancy or maternity leave is unlawful. Unfavourable treatment includes refusing to recruit a woman because she is pregnant or on maternity leave.

### 12.1 Summary

Most mothers interviewed (77%) were in employment at the time of interview. The main reasons reported by mothers that were not in work nor were they looking for work were that they wanted to look after their children themselves (75%), they could not find a job that pays enough to pay for childcare (52%), they could not find suitable childcare (45%), mothers could not find a job with the right hours (36%) or they could not find a job in a suitable location (24%).

The main reasons reported in the qualitative follow-up interviews by mothers who didn't look for work while pregnant were that they assumed employers would be unwilling to employ them, they felt it would be unfair to expect employers to employ pregnant women; and a fear of the impact on maternity benefits.

A small proportion of mothers (3%) attended job interviews when they were pregnant and half (51%) of these mothers were successful in finding a job.

Over a third of mothers (35%) who attended interviews while pregnant mentioned their pregnancy during the interview. One in 12 mothers (8%) attending job interviews while pregnant said they experienced being asked by an employer if they were pregnant. Three quarters of mothers (77%) that were unsuccessful in their job interviews while pregnant (where the employer knew about their pregnancy) felt it had affected their chances of success.

In comparison, the employers' survey found that the majority of employers (70%) believed that women should declare to potential employers during recruitment if they



are pregnant and one in four employers (24%) believed that women should work for them for at least a year before deciding to have children.

One in five mothers (21%) attended an interview after the birth of their child. Around a quarter of mothers (23%) reported being asked by an employer whether they had a young child. Three quarters of mothers who attended interviews after the birth of their baby had been successful at some or all of these interviews. Among those unsuccessful where the employer had known they had a young child, around half (47%) felt having a young child had affected their chances of getting the job.

Some mothers stated they felt it best not to mention having young children at interview because they were concerned about the impact on their chances of success.

## 12.2 Employment status of mothers

The majority of mothers surveyed reported that they were currently in work (77%), 5% of mothers stated that they were on maternity leave at the time of interview and under a fifth (18%) of mothers were not in work.

Among respondents who were not in work, one in 12 mothers (8%) said that they were not looking for work, 5% were looking for work and a further 5% of respondents were either on a career break, sabbatical or in education or training.

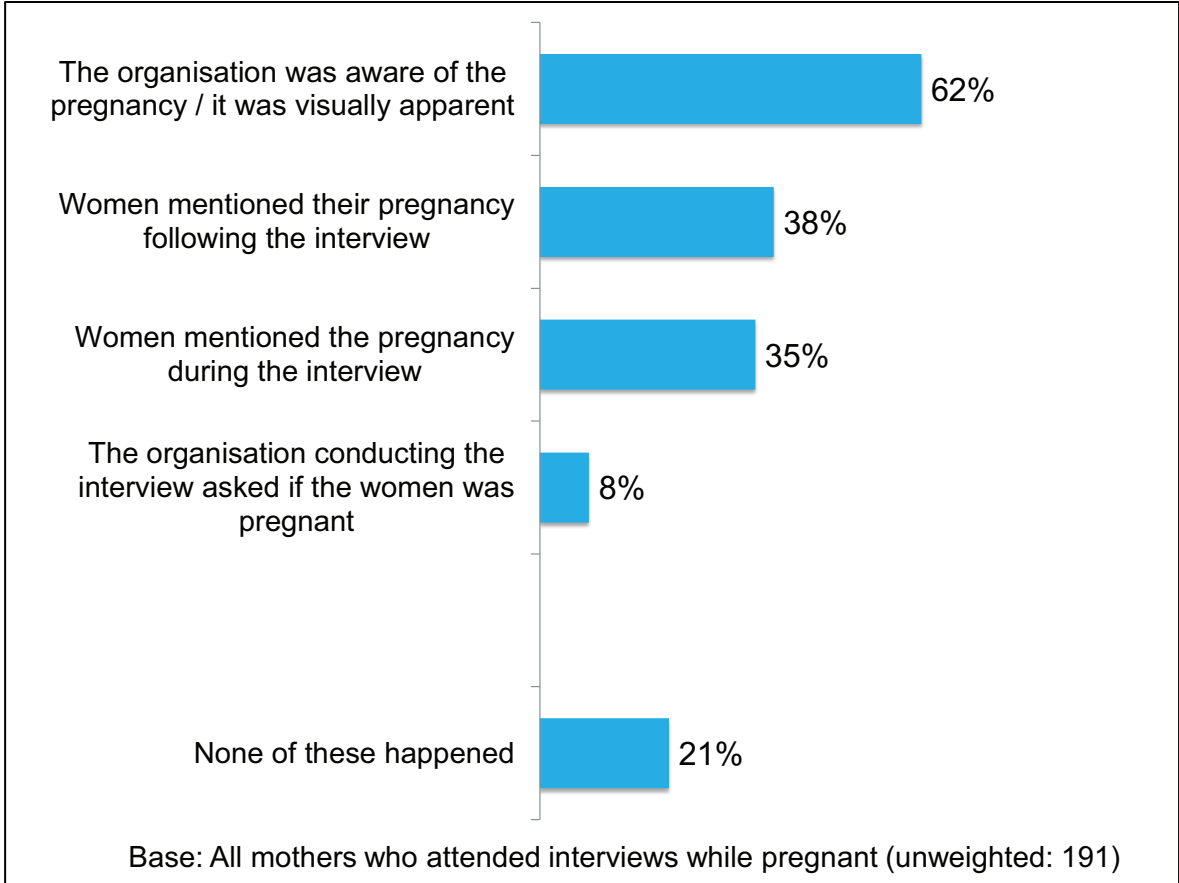
Mothers who were not working (nor on maternity leave) and were not looking for work were asked why they were not looking for work. The main reasons given were that mothers wanted to look after their children themselves (75%), they could not find a job that pays enough to pay for childcare (52%), they could not find suitable childcare (45%), mothers could not find a job with the right hours (36%) or they could not find a job in a suitable location (24%).

## 12.3 Experiences of mothers attending interviews during pregnancy

A relatively small proportion of mothers (3%) attended job interviews while pregnant. Just over six in 10 mothers (62%) said the organisation conducting the interview was aware of their pregnancy either beforehand or that it was visually apparent during their interview. Around two in five (38%) mentioned their pregnancy following their interview, and a similar proportion mentioned their pregnancy during the interview (35%).

Overall, around one in five mothers (21%) indicated their pregnancy was not raised or discussed before, at or following the interview.

**Figure 12. 1: Whether pregnancy was discussed or apparent during job interviews**



In the follow-up interviews mothers gave several reasons for deciding not to apply for a job when pregnant, or for choosing not to tell employers they were pregnant if interviewed for a position.

Most often mothers assumed employers would not want to employ a woman who was pregnant or planning to have children in the near future and decided not to apply for a new job.

*'I would have [changed jobs while pregnant] but I don't think people take on pregnant folk. . . . [I didn't apply for other jobs because] I was afraid of their reaction, how they would treat me.'*

- Mother who did not apply for new job while pregnant as assumed employers would not want to hire a pregnant woman, hairdresser, earning £5,000–£9,999 a year, aged 24–29

Some mothers were concerned that applying for a job and having an interview would be too stressful while pregnant, in part because they were concerned about the employer's attitude towards their pregnancy.

Others did not apply for jobs while pregnant as they believed it would be 'unfair' on the employer to take on someone who would then be off on maternity leave shortly after starting.

*'I think it [not applying for a position] was more to do with my feelings at that point, because I'd have felt bad about them [potential employer] having to go through the hassle of getting someone else in to cover me while I was on maternity leave. It wouldn't be fair on them to only have me for a short time and then for me to be gone.'*

- Mother who did not apply for new job while pregnant as thought unfair on employer to hire a pregnant woman, after school club worker, earning £5,000–£9,999 a year, aged 20–24

Some mothers felt it would be 'dishonest' not to disclose being pregnant at an interview, or that it was inappropriate to apply when they could not 'give everything' to a new job.

*'I wouldn't hide the fact I was pregnant, it would make me feel absolutely awful. Starting with being dishonest would not feel right.'*

- Mother who did not apply for new job while pregnant as she thought that not disclosing pregnancy at interview wrong, dental nurse, earning £10,000–£19,999 a year, aged 35–39

There were also instances where mothers did not apply for new jobs when they were pregnant or considering having children because they were concerned about losing Statutory Maternity Pay entitlement.

*'When we started trying for my baby I made sure that I was in a happy position [at work] and if I wanted to move jobs I would have had to do it before 26 weeks before I got pregnant ...because I knew I wouldn't get any support [SMP] otherwise. If I was to think about having a third child I wouldn't change jobs because you miss maternity pay and the stress of being turned down – I wouldn't have that in the pregnancy.'*

- Mother who did not apply for new job while pregnant to avoid loss of SMP, finance administrator, earning £10,000–£19,999 a year, aged 30–34

A low proportion of mothers (3%) attended job interviews during their pregnancy, of which around half of mothers (51%) who attended a job interview while pregnant reported that they were successful.

Of the mothers who were unsuccessful at any of their job interviews they attended while pregnant, a third of respondents (34%) felt that their pregnancy definitely

affected their success and a further two fifths (43%) of mothers felt their pregnancy possibly or in some cases affected whether or not they were successful.

### Case study: Example of feeling pregnancy affected chances of being promoted, regional manager for publishing company, earning £30,000–£39,999 a year, aged 30–34

*Stephanie* worked in sales for a publishing company, in a middle management role. She was asked to apply for an internal vacancy in a senior management role, however when she revealed she was pregnant she said she was discouraged from applying.

*'I had been asked to go to another [internal] interview while I was pregnant and when I spoke to them about the pregnancy it was: "I don't think it is a good idea to go for that change in position"... I think because I was going to be off for a year with maternity leave and they didn't really want to wait [to appoint someone]. It was a very male-orientated and traditional environment once you got to senior management and their wives were stay-at-home mothers and I think that altered how they perceived mothers.'*

*'I was managing someone at the time and I would like to have thought I would have been able to have risen further. I think there was an assumption that if you have a child you weren't going to give it everything you had done previously.'*

*Stephanie* felt that this had a negative impact on her career to the extent that she decided to retrain and start her own business.

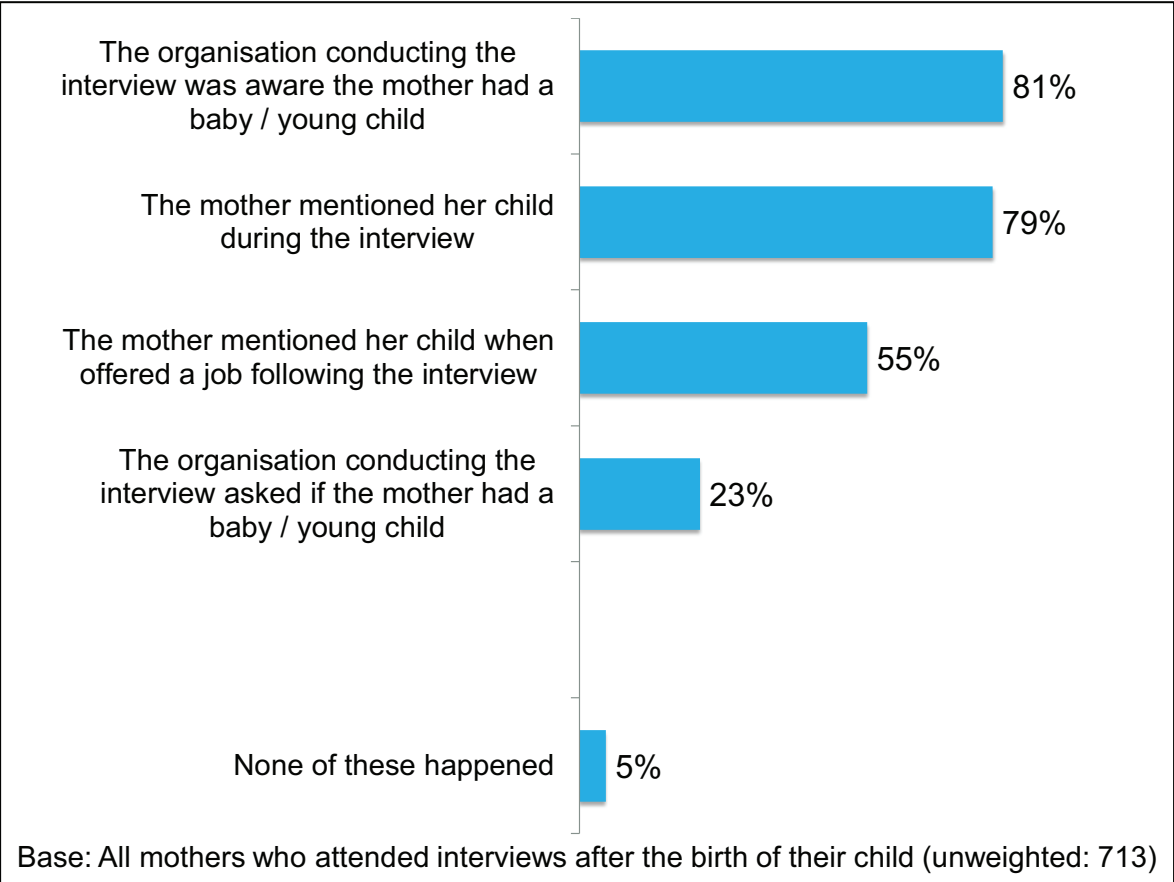
*'It [not being considered for promotion because of pregnancy] knocks your confidence quite a lot and your feeling of self-worth. I have decided to put myself in a position where I wouldn't be held back [by retraining and starting own company].'*

## 12.4 Mothers with young children's experiences at job interviews

One in five mothers (21%) attended a job interview since the birth of their baby.

In most cases where mothers attended interviews after the birth of their baby, the employer was aware the mother had a young child (81%) or the mother mentioned this during the interview (79%). In many cases mothers mentioned they had a young child again after being offered a job (55%).

**Figure 12. 2: Experiences of mothers with young children at job interviews**



Around a quarter of mothers (23%) who attended a job interview after the birth of their child reported that at least one organisation conducting an interview asked if they had a young child. 5% said they neither mentioned having a young child nor were asked about it by an employer.

In the follow-up interviews, some mothers stated they felt it best not to mention having young children at interview because they were concerned about how this might impact on their chances of success; others doubted there was any point in applying for jobs.

*'As a new mum with one baby there'll be an expectation I'll be having another one soon, and I want to work flexibly. I think that combination makes me massively unemployable ...in my business you can't get a new job when you're pregnant or have young kids'.*

- Mother who would not mention young family at interview , public relations director for large hospitality organisation, earning £100,000 or more a year, aged 35–39

Three quarters of mothers who attended interviews after the birth of their baby were successful at some or all of these interviews; a higher proportion than those interviewed during pregnancy (51%).

Half of the mothers (47%) who were unsuccessful in all of their job interviews after the birth of their baby (where the employer knew they had a young baby) felt having a young child had negatively affected their chances of success.

The follow-up interviews also show in some cases mothers felt they were passed over for internal promotions (often to management positions) because they had young families and needed to work flexibly.

### Case study: Example of feeling having children affected chances of success in internal job interviews, assistant producer for a media company, earning £20,000–£29,999 a year, aged 40–44

*Claire* worked as a radio producer at the same media organisation for over 10 years. She was working part-time having returned to work following maternity leave after having her third child. *Claire* felt that she had been unsuccessful in several internal promotion interviews because of having children during the last few years.

*'I've worked at [media organisation] a long time and my eldest is seven so in the last eight years I've been pregnant and having kids and during that time it has been pretty impossible to get a promotion. Before that [having children] I was getting promotions and since I've been on and off pregnant and on maternity leave, it's not been happening [being promoted]. I have had to accept that I'm not going to be able to move up [to management level], that's the negative side of working and having children that I just had to put my career on hold.'*

## 13. Conclusions

The Pregnancy and maternity-related discrimination and disadvantage research provides an evidence base on the current scale and nature of possible discriminatory practice experienced by pregnant women at work and new mothers on their return to work. It also explores employer attitudes, approaches and challenges in managing pregnancy and maternity in the workplace.

This chapter summarises findings on the experiences of mothers in relation to the management of pregnancy and maternity in the workplace. It also highlights relevant comparable findings from the survey of employers published in a separate report.<sup>10</sup> Key areas explored in the conclusion section include the prevalence of negative or possible discrimination and disadvantage; concerns and complaints raised by mothers in relation to experiences. The conclusion also reports perceptions of employer support during pregnancy and on return to work; the identification and management of risks and communication between employers and mothers on maternity leave and return to work. The remainder of the report covers loss of employment while pregnant or on maternity leave; requesting flexible working arrangements; breastfeeding; and mothers' experiences in relation to recruitment.

### Prevalence of negative experiences or possible discrimination and disadvantage in the workplace

Three in four mothers (77%) said they had a negative or possibly discriminatory experience at work during pregnancy; maternity leave; or on return from maternity leave.

Half 50% of mothers said they had experienced a negative impact on their opportunity, status or job security; if scaled up to the general population this could mean as many as 260,000 mothers per year.

A fifth (20%) of mothers reported financial loss as a result of their pregnancy; if scaled up to the general population this could mean as many as 100,000 mothers per

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<sup>10</sup> Adams, L., Winterbotham, M. et. al (2016) *Pregnancy and Maternity-related Discrimination and Disadvantage: Experiences of Employers*, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills and Equalities and Human Rights Commission.

year. A similar proportion of mothers (20%) said they had experienced harassment or negative comments related to pregnancy.

As many as 11% felt forced to leave their job; if scaled up to the general population this could mean as many as 54,000 mothers per year.

11% of mothers reported a negative experience related to flexible working; if scaled up to the general population this could mean as many as 56,000 mothers per year. A minority (5%) of mothers said they had a negative experience in relation to breastfeeding or expressing milk at work; if scaled up to the general population this could mean as many as 24,000 mothers a year.

Two in five mothers (41%) felt there was a risk to, or impact on, their health or welfare; if scaled up to the general population this could mean as many as 210,000 mothers per year. Overall, 4% of mothers reported leaving their job because risks were not properly tackled; if scaled up to the general population this could mean as many as 21,000 mothers per year.

Some mothers were more likely to report negative or possibly discriminatory experiences when other factors were taken into account. Length of service prior to maternity leave was an important factor in determining the likelihood of mothers reporting any negative or possible discriminatory experiences. Mothers who worked for their employer for more than five years were less likely than average to report any negative or possibly discriminatory experience. Those who had less than a year's service were more likely than average to say they felt forced to leave their job or that they had experienced a risk or impact on health or welfare. However, those that had worked at their employer for between two and five years were more likely to say they had experienced a negative or possibly discriminatory negative impact on opportunity, status or job security; financial loss; or harassment or negative comments.

Occupation was also found to be an important factor in determining experiences of mothers. Mothers working in Skilled trades occupations were more likely than average to report feeling forced to leave their job; financial loss; or, a negative impact on opportunity, status or job security. Mothers working in Caring, leisure and other service occupations were more likely than average to say they experienced a risk to, or impact on, their health or welfare; or, some other type of negative experience. Those working in Administrative and secretarial occupations and Elementary occupations were the least likely to report any negative or possibly discriminatory experience.

The employers' survey found that one in seven employers (15%) thought their employees could sometimes feel resentful of new mothers and pregnant colleagues. The majority (82%) of employers said that they found it easy to manage the negative attitudes of other employees, however some employers may not be aware of the extent to which their staff are exposed to negative attitudes from other colleagues around pregnancy and the return to work after maternity leave as a small proportion reported difficulties managing the negative attitudes of other employees (5%).



## Raising concerns and complaints

Three in four mothers (77%) reported a negative or possibly discriminatory experience. Around one in five mothers (22%) reported raising issues with anyone. Many mothers experienced barriers to raising complaints and concerns with employers; and experiences of those who had were often negative. One in 12 (8%) mothers sought advice from external organisations such as Acas or the Citizens Advice Bureau; often where mothers told their employer about this, it triggered positive action from employers. 2% of mothers went through an internal grievance procedure. In relation to internal grievances, around one in four mothers (27%) who considered but chose not to go through their employer's internal grievance procedure said the prospect was too daunting. Other reasons for deciding not to go through an internal grievance procedure included that the issue had been resolved (24%).

1%\* of mothers lodged a complaint with an employment tribunal. The most common reason for not lodging a complaint with an employment tribunal (22%) was that the mother said the situation was resolved before it got to the stage of going through an employment tribunal. Less than one in seven mothers (15%) said this was because it was too daunting to lodge a complaint.

Findings from the in-depth follow-up interviews reported other barriers to raising complaints including: fear of creating bad feeling with their colleagues or employer; fear of adverse consequences; stress and tiredness; belief nothing would change; lack of information about rights; lack of clear complaints procedures; a sense of guilt; and the financial cost of pursuing a complaint.

The employer survey suggests that complaints or discussions about unfair treatment are rare. 5% of employers with experience in the last three years of a pregnant employee at their workplace or a mother returning to work following maternity leave had received either a formal complaint relating to pregnancy or maternity discrimination (1%) and/or had informal discussions with women about perceived unfair treatment (4%).

## Employer support and line manager/HR dynamic

Despite the prevalence of mothers reporting any negative or possibly discriminatory experience (77%), two thirds of mothers (66%) reported that their employer willingly supported their needs as both a pregnant woman and as a mother of a young baby. These results are explored in the qualitative follow-up interviews and can be interpreted, at least in part, by mothers' low expectations of support. Some mothers considered their needs to have been supported if they received their statutory entitlements (for example, being allowed to attend antenatal appointments in work time; receiving the correct maternity pay; and having a job to return to, even where a mother had to fight for these things).

The majority of women reported positive experiences after telling their employer they were pregnant and 89% of mothers felt equally valued as an employee after telling their employer they were pregnant. The employer survey found that the majority of

employers (84%) felt it was in their interests to support pregnant women and those on maternity leave. The main reason for this was improving staff retention.

Four in five mothers reported that their employer supported their needs as a pregnant employee willingly. One in three mothers felt their employers did not support their needs willingly at either or both pregnancy and on their return from maternity leave. The main reasons given by mothers for not feeling supported were that they felt their employer was unsympathetic and/or gave no consideration to their pregnancy (66%). This was followed by no reduction in workload (21%); not granting requests for flexible working (14%); or no checks on health and safety (13%). The follow-up interviews showed that for mothers to say this, negative experiences were generally numerous and/or severe; it took repeated negative experiences for a mother to consider her employer 'unsupportive'.

The follow-up interviews found that the most positive experiences were described by mothers who felt they had both supportive line managers and a supportive Human Resources (HR) department. Treatment by a line manager was generally felt to have a greater impact on the experiences of mothers (whether positive or negative) than the role played by HR. Although on paper many supportive employers were simply fulfilling their statutory obligations (for example allowing mothers to attend appointments and covering maternity pay), mothers were especially positive about their experience of feeling supported if the attitude of managers and general culture of the workplace was supportive and positive about pregnancy and work-life balance.

## Identification and management of risks

Three in five mothers (62%) reported that their employer initiated a discussion about potential risks arising from their pregnancy. Where the employer initiated a discussion about potential risks, four in five mothers (79%) said their employer made them aware of actual risks to them or their baby (half of mothers (49%) overall).

Most mothers who had been made aware of risks by their employer felt all risks were tackled (77%), but one in five (19%) felt that some but not all were dealt with and a small proportion (2%) felt none were dealt with.

One in five mothers (19%) said they identified risks their employer did not. The majority of mothers who identified risks themselves raised these with their employer (86%). One in five mothers (18%) said their employer had not tackled risks identified (by themselves or their employer).

However, the follow-up interviews showed that in some instances, mothers sometimes felt that their employer had a 'tick-box' approach to assessment and management of risk during pregnancy to comply with company procedures; that employers had not dealt properly with risks; and that those conducting the risk assessments were not really interested in their welfare.

## Communication and return to work

The majority of mothers felt they had or were having the right amount of contact with their employers while on maternity leave. However a quarter of mothers (26%) were more likely to report too little contact with their employer while on maternity leave rather than too much (4%). Under two thirds of mothers (62%) who reported too little contact said that they would have liked to receive general updates about what was happening at work. A minority of mothers (6%) reported experiencing disagreement with their employer about when they had to notify them about their intention to return to work. In some instances, the in-depth interviews found that too little communication left mothers feeling isolated or undervalued.

The employer study found that a quarter of employers (25%) said the uncertainty around whether those on maternity leave would return to work was difficult for them to manage. In some cases, the difficulties employers experienced in managing maternity leave was compounded by their uncertainty about how often to contact women on maternity leave. It was relatively common for employers to be concerned that contact could be perceived as pressuring women to return to work sooner (29% of employers felt it could be interpreted in this way).

## Returning to work

Most mothers returned to the same employer following maternity leave. This was generally to the same job title and description they held before maternity leave (83% of returners). A minority of mothers (6%) described other changes to their role that they felt were against their wishes. A further 4% of mothers returned to a different job that they claimed was not the role they wanted to do.

One in ten mothers (9%) said that they felt treated worse by their employer on their return to work than they were before pregnancy.

## Loss of employment while pregnant or on maternity leave

Around one in 20 (6%) mothers reported being made redundant at some point during pregnancy, maternity leave or on return from maternity leave. Of those made redundant, a quarter (26%) took voluntary redundancy, a quarter of mothers (27%) were offered an alternative position at the same or higher level. Two thirds of mothers (67%) stated that other people were made redundant at the same time.

A low share of mothers (1%) reported experiencing compulsory redundancy where no others were made redundant and they were not offered an alternative position.

## Flexible working requests

Over two thirds (68%) of mothers made a request for at least one flexible working practice. The most popular type of flexible working requested was to work part-time instead of full-time (45%). For most types of flexible working, the majority of mothers

from their perspective (around three in four) had their requests approved. More often than not, where requests were approved this was completed straightaway depending on the type of flexible working requested.

Around two in five mothers (38%) did not request a type of flexible working they wanted. This was typically because they did not think it would be approved (reported by 64% of respondents that did not submit a request) or because they were worried their employer would view the request negatively (50%).

Findings from the employer study show that three in five employers (58%) who had managed a pregnant worker in the last three years had received requests for flexible working, of which most of these were granted (84%). Of the 14% of employers that had turned down at least one request, the main reason given was that it did not fit with operational requirements (43%).

Around half of mothers (51%) who had their flexible working request approved said they felt it resulted in negative consequences:

## Breastfeeding

One in five mothers (22%) who returned to work from maternity leave continued breastfeeding. Of the mothers that reported to continue breastfeeding, three in ten expressed milk or breastfed at work.

One in five mothers (19%) that had stopped breastfeeding stated that returning to work had influenced their decision. Three quarters of these mothers (74%) reported that it was either impractical to express milk or breastfeed at work; thought it would be impractical; or said that there were no facilities to do so at work.

One in 10 mothers who were breastfeeding around the time of their return from maternity leave reported feeling uncomfortable or unsure about discussing with their employer the possibility of breastfeeding or expressing milk at work. However where these discussions took place they were more likely to be positive than negative.

The employer survey found that over half of employers (53%) reported providing facilities for mothers to express milk. Relatively few employers had received any requests relating to breastfeeding or expressing milk in the past three years (8%).

## Recruitment and looking for work

The majority of mothers surveyed reported that they were currently in work (77%). Among respondents who were not in work, one in 12 mothers (8%) said that they were not looking for work. The main reasons given were that mothers wanted to look after their children themselves (75%), they could not find a job that pays enough to pay for childcare (52%), they could not find suitable childcare (45%), mothers could not find a job with the right hours (36%) or they could not find a job in a suitable location (24%).

A small proportion of mothers (3%) attended job interviews when they were pregnant and half (51%) of these mothers were successful in finding a job.

Over a third of mothers (35%) who attended interviews while pregnant mentioned their pregnancy during the interview. One in 12 mothers (8%) attending job interviews while pregnant said they experienced being asked by an employer if they were pregnant. Three quarters of mothers (77%) that were unsuccessful in their job interviews while pregnant (where the employer knew about their pregnancy) felt it had affected their chances of success.

In comparison, the employers' survey found that the majority of employers (70%) believed that women should declare to potential employers during recruitment if they are pregnant and one in four employers (24%) believed that women should work for them for at least a year before deciding to have children.

One in five mothers (21%) attended an interview after the birth of their child. Around a quarter of mothers (23%) reported being asked by an employer whether they had a young child. Three quarters of mothers who attended interviews after the birth of their baby had been successful at some or all of these interviews. Among those unsuccessful where the employer had known they had a young child, around half (47%) felt having a young child had affected their chances of getting the job.

Some mothers stated they felt it best not to mention having young children at interview because they were concerned about the impact on their chances of success.

Mothers who felt well supported by their employer during pregnancy were more likely to return after maternity leave; often with greater loyalty and commitment.

## 14. Technical appendix - Methodology

### Mothers' survey

Interviews were conducted by telephone. In order to obtain telephone numbers for mothers, a postal and online opt-in approach was used.

Mothers in Great Britain who had a child between nine and 24 months, who had worked during pregnancy, were eligible for interview.

### Sampling

An unclustered sampling approach was taken and a random sample was drawn within England, Scotland and Wales. Mothers in Scotland and Wales were oversampled with the aim of achieving a minimum of 400 interviews in these nations.

The sampling was conducted in two tranches. A lower than anticipated response rate to the initial postal and online opt-in phase meant that a second tranche of sampling was needed to generate a large enough starting sample to achieve the target 3,000 interviews with mothers. In addition, the response rate to the first opt-in tranche was low among the youngest age groups and therefore skewed towards older mothers; the second tranche of sampling presented an opportunity to oversample younger mothers in order to minimise the skew.

In the first tranche 23,000 mothers of children born between 18 September 2012 and 18 December 2013 were sampled at random from birth registration records held by ONS (Office for National Statistics) and NRS (National Records of Scotland).

In the second tranche 22,000 mothers of children born between 16 January 2013 and 16 April 2014 were sampled from the birth registration records held by ONS and NRS. A sample of 12,000 mothers was drawn at random (tranche 2a). A sample of 10,000 mothers under 30 years old was drawn at random (tranche 2b), stratifying the sample by those aged under 25 and those between 25 and 29.

All initial sample selection was screened against the Register of Deaths, with any matched being removed and replaced. Mothers selected also had to have an address that is their usual residence in Great Britain in the nation for which they were being sampled.

In total, a sample of 45,000 records were sampled, Table 14.1 shows the number of records sampled by nation and tranche.

**Table 14. 1: Sample drawn from the birth registration records for each tranche**

<b>Nation</b>	<b>Number of records sampled in tranche 1</b>	<b>Number of records sampled in tranche 2a</b>	<b>Number of records sampled in tranche 2b</b>	<b>Total number of records sampled</b>
<b>England</b>	<b>16,100</b>	<b>8,400</b>	<b>7,000</b>	<b>31,500</b>
<b>Wales</b>	<b>3,450</b>	<b>1,800</b>	<b>1,500</b>	<b>6,750</b>
<b>Scotland</b>	<b>3,450</b>	<b>1,800</b>	<b>1,500</b>	<b>6,750</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>23,000</b>	<b>12,000</b>	<b>10,000</b>	<b>45,000</b>

## Survey methodology

### Opt-in process

To obtain contact details for a telephone survey an initial opt-in process was undertaken, whereby sampled mothers were sent a letter introducing the survey and a short questionnaire to return by post. The option to reply online was provided. Packs for mothers in Wales contained both English and Welsh language versions of the documents.

A postal approach was taken because only postal addresses were available on the sample and both ONS and NRS were not legally able to share data. A postal approach meant that ONS and NRS could mail out the postal opt-in letter and questionnaire themselves so that data did not need to go through a third party.

Each sampled record received a pack that contained an introductory letter and an opt-in questionnaire that was kept short to encourage completion, containing just a few questions: mother's age; ethnicity; current working status; working status during pregnancy; and contact details.

The introductory letter that accompanied the opt-in questionnaire described the survey as exploring general experiences of motherhood in the 21st century, rather than negative experiences at work, so as not to bias the opt-in sample. However, given low opt-in rates among younger mothers in tranche one, the introductory letter for the survey was redesigned for tranche two to make it more appealing to a younger audience and increase the response rate among mothers under 30. Elements of the redesign included adding pictorial icons; changing the title to ask specifically for 16 to 29 year olds to respond; and printing the letter in colour.

For tranche one if mothers did not respond to the initial letter and opt-in questionnaire pack they were sent up to two reminder packs containing the same information. When posting out the second and third pack IFF passed details of opt-outs and anyone who had completed the interviews to ONS and NRS so they

could remove these records from the subsequent mail outs. For tranche two, due to time constraints, only one pack was sent out, with no subsequent reminder packs.

To boost the opt-in rate, for the third pack of tranche one a prize draw was introduced for anyone who opted in to the survey (regardless of whether they were eligible to take part). The prize draw comprised of five cash prizes – a first prize of £500 and four runners up prizes of £250 each. A prize draw was also offered to those who were sampled for tranches 2a and 2b, which also comprised five cash prizes (a first prize of £500 and four runners up prizes of £100 each).

In total 7,082 mothers opted in to the survey (89% by post, 11% online). Of these, 5,162 (73%) indicated that they had worked during pregnancy and therefore were eligible for the telephone survey.

Table 14.2 below shows the response rate for each mail out tranche and the proportion of mothers in each tranche eligible to take part.

**Table 14. 2: Response to postal opt-in phase and eligibility rate by tranche**

	Tranche 1	Tranche 2a	Tranche 2b	Total
<b>Starting sample</b>	<b>23,000</b>	<b>12,000</b>	<b>10,000</b>	<b>45,000</b>
<b>Opted in (% of starting sample)</b>	<b>4,362 (19%)</b>	<b>1,850 (15%)</b>	<b>870 (9%)</b>	<b>7,082 (16%)</b>
<b>Eligible (% of opted in)</b>	<b>3,163 (73%)</b>	<b>1,407 (76%)</b>	<b>592 (68%)</b>	<b>5,162 (73%)</b>

### **Main survey**

3,254 CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviews) were completed between 9 October 2014 and 1 May 2015. A census approach was taken with all 5,162 of the eligible starting sample contacted up to 10 times to achieve a definite call outcome.

On average interviews lasted around 30 minutes.

Call outcomes for every eligible sample record are shown below. This table also shows survey response rate as a percentage of sample in scope for fieldwork (64%). As a proportion of all total drawn sample (adjusted for the assumed eligibility based on eligibility rate established through opt-in response) the response rate was 11%.



**Table 14. 3: Fieldwork outcomes and response rate**

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Number of records</b>	<b>% of sample in scope for telephone fieldwork (base=5,047)</b>
<b>Total drawn sample</b>	<b>45,000</b>	
<b>Didn't respond to opt-in exercise</b>	<b>37,918</b>	
<b>Assumed eligibles among non-responders (based on eligibility rate established through opt-in response)</b>	<b>25,784</b>	
<b>Assumed total eligible drawn sample (assumed eligibles among non-responders + known eligibles among opt-in sample)</b>	<b>30,831</b>	
<b>Opted-in</b>	<b>7,082</b>	
<b>Ineligible from opt-in exercise</b>	<b>1,920</b>	
<b>Ineligible once screened over the phone</b>	<b>115</b>	
<b>Total eligible sample in scope for survey</b>	<b>5,047</b>	
<b>Complete interviews</b>	<b>3,254</b>	<b>64%</b>
<b>Refused (including breakdown during interview)</b>	<b>357</b>	<b>7%</b>
<b>Not available during fieldwork</b>	<b>761</b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>Number unobtainable</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>4%</b>
<b>Called 10 times with no definite call outcome</b>	<b>493</b>	<b>10%</b>
		<b>100%</b>

## Weighting

Weighting was conducted to correct for the over-sampling of mothers in Scotland and Wales, and for younger mothers in tranche two. The weighting also corrected for variations in response to both the opt-in and main survey, depending on mothers' characteristics.

The weighting was performed in two stages:

Stage one: This initial stage corrected for oversampling of younger mothers and response bias at the opt-in stage. The opt-in sample to the profile of the invited universe supplied by ONS and NRS using a Random Iterative Method (RIM) weighting approach. The RIM weights used were age; Output Area Classifications (a classification which groups output areas (or datazones in Scotland) into clusters based on similar demographic characteristics); and region.

RIM weighting was employed rather than regression weighting at this stage as age profile for the eligible population was only available in aggregate, rather than record level.

This stage ensured that the opt-in sample very closely matched the eligible population profile.

Stage two: This stage first involved deleting ineligible from the weighted opt-in sample (produced in Stage one) to give an estimate of the universe for eligible mothers.

Following this, multivariate analysis (Chi-squared Automatic Interaction Detection or CHAID) was undertaken to determine which combination of the variables available for all eligible records best predicted whether or not they went on to complete a telephone survey interview. This analysis revealed that current working status and age were the most significant variables in predicting response at this stage.

Regression analysis was run to determine probabilities of completion for each record, and a Stage two weight was generated, which was the inverse of this probability.

Stage one and Stage two weights were combined to give a final weight for completed interviews.

## Qualitative follow-up

Following the telephone survey, face-to-face, in-depth qualitative interviews were conducted with 60 mothers.

## Recruitment and sampling

The sample used for this stage of the research came from those that agreed to be re-contacted during the telephone fieldwork. The majority of mothers (94%) that took part in the telephone survey agreed that in principle, they were willing to take part in this next stage.

The sample was structured by age, skill/salary level and experiences of employer support during pregnancy, maternity leave and return to work reported in the survey, to ensure a range of mothers. Mothers were each assigned to one of the following categories based on their responses in the survey:

- higher skilled/higher earners (over £30,000)

- lower skilled/lower earners (less than £30,000) and under 25, and
- lower skilled/lower earners over 25.

For the purposes of the qualitative sample mothers were also categorised by the level of support reported at work during pregnancy; maternity leave; and on return to work from maternity leave. Mothers were allocated into one of three categories based on their responses in the survey:

**Table 14. 4: Definition of level of support used for recruitment of qualitative interviews**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>Negative experience</b> (not supported at either pregnancy or return to work)	<b>Mothers who stated that they were supported somewhat or very reluctantly, or not supported at all during pregnancy and return to work from maternity leave (or just pregnancy if they had not returned to work).</b>
<b>Mixed experience</b> (supported willingly but still reported some type of negative or possibly discriminatory experience)	<b>Mothers who stated they were supported willingly during pregnancy and return to work from maternity leave (or just pregnancy if they had not returned to work), but reported some type of negative or possibly discriminatory experience.</b>
<b>Positive experience</b> (supported willingly and reported no type of negative or possibly discriminatory experience)	<b>Mothers who stated they were supported willingly during pregnancy and return to work from maternity leave (or just pregnancy if they had not returned to work) and did not report any type of negative or possibly discriminatory experience.</b>

Recruitment for the face-to-face interviews was conducted over the phone. This established whether the respondent was happy to take part and arrange a time and location for an interviewer to conduct the interview. Recruitment began for the qualitative stage in March 2015.

### **Face-to-face interviews**

Interviews were conducted between 26 March 2015 and 19 May 2015. All interviews took place at a location convenient to the mother and took around an hour. Interviewers covered England, Scotland and Wales.

The interview topic guide was designed in collaboration with BIS and EHRC and was designed to allow mothers to expand on their experiences described in the survey. The topic guide was piloted over the first five interviews, and some small amendments to flow and length made to improve the respondent experience.

60 interviews were achieved in total. The table below shows a breakdown of the interviews achieved according to the key groups detailed above.

**Table 14. 5: Number of interviews achieved by level of support and earnings**

	<b>Negative experience</b>	<b>Mixed experience</b>	<b>Positive experience</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>Higher skilled/ higher earners</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Lower skilled/ lower earners under 25</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Lower skilled/ lower earners over 25</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>60</b>

Certain groups were also targeted to ensure a sufficient number of interviews to explore particular groups or experience in the qualitative research:

- those working in Caring, leisure and other service occupations (12 interviews completed)
- those working in the Finance sector (9)
- ethnic minority mothers (8)
- disabled mothers (8)
- lowest earning mothers (those earning less than £9,999; 14)
- highest earning mothers (those earning over £60,000; 4)
- those who stated their return to work influenced their decision stop breastfeeding and wanted to continue (3), and

- those who raised a concern with employer or manager or lodged a formal complaint or gone to employment tribunal (16).

The breakdown of the qualitative interviews by the industry sector and occupation of the mother during pregnancy are shown in the tables below.

**Table 14. 6: Number of interviews achieved by sector**

<b>Sector</b>	<b>Number of interviews completed</b>
<b>Agriculture</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Manufacturing</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Utilities</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Construction</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Trade</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Transport and Communications</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Hotels and Restaurants</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Finance</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Real Estate and Business</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Public Admin</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Education</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Health and Social Work</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Other Community</b>	<b>4</b>

**Table 14. 7: Number of interviews achieved by occupation**

<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Number of interviews completed</b>
<b>Administrative and secretarial occupations</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Associate professional and technical occupations</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Caring, leisure and other service occupations</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Elementary occupations</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Managers, directors and senior officials</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Process and plant occupations</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Professional occupations</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Sales and customer service occupations</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Skilled trades occupations</b>	<b>2</b>

All interviews were coded, analysed and entered into a bespoke electronic analysis framework so that themes and findings from the research were explored alone or in conjunction with the survey findings to identify patterns in the data set. Data was analysed by subject or theme (for example expectations of support, experience of requesting flexible working arrangements) as well as by respondent group (for example mothers working in particular occupations or sectors) to explore the data from different perspectives.

### Reporting conventions

Survey results are presented on weighted data.

In charts and tables, we use '^' to indicate findings of less than 0.5% and '-' to show findings of 0%.

Where differences are referred to in the report, these are statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.

Within the report, differences by sub-group such as age, occupation and sector are often discussed. Where it is stated, for example, that 'Mothers working in the Transport and Communication sector were twice as likely as average to report financial loss' this simply means the figure working for Transport and Communication sector employers was twice the all mothers figure.

Where the report states that particular sub-groups are the most or the least likely to have experienced something or to have a particular view, for example, 'Mothers working in the Utilities sector were most likely to have felt forced to leave their job', then the result in this sector is significantly different (here, higher) to the figure among all other employers (that is, excluding mothers working in the Utilities sector).

The test applied throughout is a t-test at the 95% confidence level; this has been applied to the effective sample size base, which takes into account the design effect.

Where mothers' names have been used in case studies, these are not their real names.

## Interpreting the report

Where the report refers to mothers, these are the women that completed the survey, who gave birth between 18 September 2012 and 18 December 2013 from the tranche one sample, or 16 January 2013 and 16 April 2014 from the tranche two sample.

Throughout the report there is reference to mothers' occupations and the industry sector that their employers belong to. These were defined from the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) and Standard Industrial Classification (SIC).

Tables 1.6 and 1.7 provide a summary of these, including examples of the types of qualifications, training and experience for each occupational group, and the types of businesses in each sector.

The report also presents some analysis by whether mothers worked for private sector or public sector employers. Mothers were not asked to classify their employer in this way. However, they were asked about the sector they worked in. Following coding to SICs to produce the sector breakdown shown in Table 1.6 below, these were further grouped into public sector and private sector workplaces. Note that this is not as accurate as SIC coding. First, it does not identify third sector organisations. Second, although some organisations falling into public sector categories such as education and health may be profit making, most will not. However, this still provides a proxy variable allowing us to explore differences by public and private sector employment.

Activities classified as public sector were: ‘Public administration and defence; compulsory social security’ (SIC 84); ‘Education’ (SIC 85); ‘Human health activities’ (SIC 86); and ‘Social work activities without accommodation’ (SIC 88). All other activities were classified as private sector. A small number of records could not be classified due to insufficient information.

Where mothers’ employment details are referred to (that is, sector or occupation) throughout the report, this is the job they were doing when pregnant unless stated otherwise.

**Table 14. 8: Employer sectors**

<b>Employment sectors - Standard Industrial Classification (SIC)</b>	<b>Examples of types of businesses in this sector</b>
<b>Agriculture, Fishery, Mining</b>	<b>Forestry and logging; Extraction of crude petroleum and natural gas; Fishing</b>
<b>Manufacturing</b>	<b>Manufacture of food products; Manufacture of textiles</b>
<b>Utilities</b>	<b>Waste collection, treatment and disposal activities; electricity / gas supply</b>
<b>Construction</b>	<b>Construction of buildings; Civil engineering; Electrical/plumbing activities</b>
<b>Trade</b>	<b>Retail sale of food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores; Wholesale and retail trade and repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles</b>
<b>Transport and Communication</b>	<b>Passenger or freight rail transport; Passenger air transport; Postal and courier activities; Telecommunications; Publishing of books, periodicals and other publishing activities</b>
<b>Hotels and Restaurants</b>	<b>Hotels and similar accommodation; Restaurants and mobile food service activities</b>
<b>Finance</b>	<b>Central banking; Trusts, funds and similar financial entities; Insurance; Pension funding</b>
<b>Real Estate and Business</b>	<b>Buying and selling of own real estate; Legal and accounting activities; Architectural and engineering activities; Scientific research and development; Advertising and market research</b>



<b>Employment sectors - Standard Industrial Classification (SIC)</b>	<b>Examples of types of businesses in this sector</b>
<b>Public Administration</b>	<b>Regulation of the activities of providing health care, education, cultural services and other social services; Provision of services to the community as a whole</b>
<b>Education</b>	<b>Primary education; Secondary education; Higher education</b>
<b>Health and Social Work</b>	<b>Hospital activities; Residential nursing care activities; Social work activities</b>
<b>Arts, Culture and Leisure</b>	<b>Performing arts; Library and archive activities; Operation of sports facilities</b>

**Table 14. 9: Occupational groups**

<b>Occupations - Standard Occupational Classification (SOC)</b>	<b>Examples of types of occupations</b>
<b>Managers, directors and senior officials</b>	<b>Chief executives; Marketing and sales directors; Social services managers and directors; Publicans and managers of licensed premises</b>
<b>Professional occupations</b>	<b>Chemical scientists; Civil engineers; IT project and programme managers; Pharmacists; Nurses; Journalists, newspaper and periodical editors</b>
<b>Associate professional and technical occupations</b>	<b>Building and civil engineering technicians; Paramedics; Housing officers; Police community support officers; Graphic designers; Authors, writers and translators; Taxation experts; Estate agents and auctioneers</b>
<b>Administrative and secretarial occupations</b>	<b>Book-keepers, payroll managers and wages clerks; Office managers; Sales administrators; Receptionists</b>
<b>Skilled trades occupations</b>	<b>Farmers; Electricians and electrical fitters; Bricklayers and masons; Plasterers; Tailors and</b>

Examples of types of occupations	
Occupations - Standard Occupational Classification (SOC)	
	dressmakers; Chefs; Florists
Caring, leisure and other service occupations	Nursery nurses and assistants; Dental nurses; Travel agents; Hairdressers and barbers
Sales and customer service occupations	Sales and retail assistants; Market and street traders and assistants; Call and contact centre occupations;
Process, plant and machine operatives	Food, drink and tobacco process operatives; Water and sewerage plant operatives; Tyre, exhaust and windscreen fitters; Scaffolders, staggers and riggers; Van drivers
Elementary occupations	Forestry workers; Postal workers, mail sorters, messengers and couriers; Window cleaners; Shelf fillers; Hospital porters

## Multivariate analysis

Two complimentary types of multivariate analysis were performed to identify the key characteristics 'driving' the likelihood of mothers reporting various experiences:

- A. **Univariate Primary Splitter CHAID Analysis.** The main purpose of this was to determine the statistical significance of the univariate association between each predictor category and each of the nine derived variables (DVs). This can be thought of as analogous to a simple correlation analysis to assess the relative size of the association.
- B. **Multivariate Analysis – Ordinal Logistic Regression.** The purpose was to obtain a multivariate version of the first analysis to assess the association between each predictor and each DV while controlling for the effects of the other predictors. This gives a better assessment of the unique contribution of each predictor and eliminates redundant predictors.

A more detailed description is given below:

### A. Univariate Primary Splitter CHAID Analysis

The SI-CHAID<sup>11</sup> Algorithm was used to perform this analysis for each of the nine DVs. Each potential predictor had its categories optimally merged and a Bonferonni-adjusted Chi-squared analysis was performed to assess the statistical significance of the association between it and the DV. The proportion answering 'yes' for each DV was summarised for each of the merged categories and the adjusted chi-squared p-value was presented.

## B. Multivariate Analysis – Ordinal Logistic Regression

A stepwise Ordinal Logistic Analysis was performed on each of the nine DVs using the GOLDmineR<sup>5</sup> algorithm. The optimal set of drivers was selected using their unmerged original categories, except in instances where there were empty categories where a manual merge was performed. An assessment of their contribution to the association with the DV was used using their unique contribution to  $L^2$ ; the likelihood-ratio chi-squared statistic. An associated p-value was calculated from this and rescaled using the transformation  $-\text{Log}_{10}(\text{p-value})$  to give an indication of the measure of importance/unique contribution of each predictor. This was rescaled to sum to 100% across predictors selected as having a  $p < 0.05$  impact on  $L^2$ .

Further to this the effect sizes for each of the categories of the retained predictors relative to the average category is presented in the form of a higher or lower than average odds of a 'yes'. Odds which are significantly different from one (equivalent to an average odds for the predictor) are highlighted.

This analysis can be interpreted as assessing the effects of the predictor on the DV while holding all other predictors equal and, unlike the univariate analysis, takes account of correlations between the predictors.

Nine binary (Yes/No) outcome variables of interest were defined; to be used as dependent variables (DV) in the analysis:

1. reported experiencing feeling forced to leave job; including feeling so badly treated they felt they had to leave, dismissal and forced redundancy.
2. reported experiencing financial loss
3. reported experiencing negative impact on opportunity, status, or job security

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<sup>11</sup> © Statistical Innovations Inc.

4. reported experiencing risk or impact on health and welfare
5. reported experiencing harassment or negative comments
6. reported experiencing negative experience related to breastfeeding
7. reported experiencing negative experience related to flexible working requests
8. reported experiencing other negative experience, and
9. reported experiencing any of the above.

The purpose of the analysis was to understand the extent to which mothers' experiences could be predicted by a number of socio-demographic independent variables:

- mothers' nation of residence
- mothers' ethnicity
- mothers' age
- mothers' religion
- whether mother has a physical or mental health condition
- mothers' salary
- mothers' length of service prior to maternity leave
- whether works full or part-time
- mothers' contract type
- mothers' occupation
- size of mothers' employer
- mothers' industrial sector
- whether or not mother is single parent
- whether first time mother: Other children: No other children - just sampled baby
- whether first time mother: Other children: Has a child younger than sampled baby

- whether first time mother: Other children: Has a child older than sampled baby
- whether mother is member of a trade union, and
- whether mothers' employer recognised trade union

These were all treated as categorical predictors, with the effect of each category considered in terms of its causal relationship with each of the nine DVs. Both methods prevent questions with more categories from dominating the analysis, which can be an issue with other machine learning algorithms such as the Random Forests R package.

The output of the multivariate analysis is shown in Tables 14.10 to 14.27 below.

**Table 14. 10: Reported feeling forced to leave job dependent variable: multivariate regression outcome**

<b>Socio-demographic independent variables</b>	<b>P-value multivariate analysis</b>	<b>Importance in multivariate binary regression</b>
<b>Length of service</b>	<b>0.00000000027</b>	<b>43%</b>
<b>Occupation</b>	<b>0.0000032</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>Industrial sector</b>	<b>0.0055</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>Whether have physical or mental long-term health condition</b>	<b>0.0095</b>	<b>9%</b>
<b>Religion</b>	<b>0.026</b>	<b>7%</b>
<b>Whether employer recognised trade union</b>	<b>0.04</b>	<b>6%</b>

**Table 14. 11: Reported feeling forced to leave job dependent variable: odds for each category of importance of being different from average category outcome**

<b>Socio-demographic independent variables</b>		<b>Odds for each category of being different from average category outcome<sup>12</sup></b>
<b>Length of service</b>		
< 1 year		<b>1.90*</b>
1-2 years		<b>1.10</b>
2-5 years		<b>1.01</b>
>5 years		<b>0.47*</b>
<b>Occupation</b>		
Managers, directors and senior officials		<b>1.06</b>
Professional occupations		<b>0.59*</b>
Associate professional and technical occupations		<b>0.61*</b>
Administrative and secretarial occupations		<b>0.51*</b>
Skilled trades occupations		<b>4.87*</b>
Caring, leisure and other service occupations		<b>1.39</b>
Sales and customer service occupations		<b>0.56*</b>
Process, plant and machine operatives		<b>1.43</b>

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<sup>12</sup> >1 = more likely to experience (for example, 2 = twice as likely than average) and <1 = less likely to experience (for example, 0.5 = half as likely than average). The asterix (\*) indicates that the figure is significantly different to 1.

<b>Socio-demographic independent variables</b>	<b>Odds for each category of being different from average category outcome<sup>12</sup></b>
<b>Elementary occupations</b>	<b>0.93</b>
<b>Sector</b>	
<b>Agriculture, Fishery and Mining</b>	<b>0.75</b>
<b>Manufacturing</b>	<b>0.96</b>
<b>Utilities</b>	<b>3.44*</b>
<b>Construction</b>	<b>1.59</b>
<b>Trade</b>	<b>1.16</b>
<b>Hotels and Restaurants</b>	<b>0.74</b>
<b>Transport and Communication</b>	<b>1.51</b>
<b>Finance</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Real Estate and Business</b>	<b>0.63*</b>
<b>Public Admin and Defence</b>	<b>0.38*</b>
<b>Education</b>	<b>0.77</b>
<b>Health and Social Work</b>	<b>0.74</b>
<b>Other Community</b>	<b>1.44</b>
<b>Physical or Mental Health Condition</b>	
<b>No</b>	<b>0.77*</b>
<b>Yes</b>	<b>1.3*</b>
<b>Religion</b>	
<b>Christian</b>	<b>1.13</b>
<b>Other religion</b>	<b>0.64*</b>
	<b>1*</b>
<b>No religion</b>	<b>1.38*</b>

Socio-demographic independent variables		Odds for each category of being different from average category outcome <sup>12</sup>
Whether employer recognised trade union		
No		1.2*
Yes		0.83*

**Table 14. 12: Reported experiencing financial loss job dependent variable: multivariate regression outcome**

Socio-demographic independent variables	P-value multivariate analysis	Importance in multivariate binary regression
Whether full or part-time	0.00000025	24%
Industrial sector	0.0000044	19%
Occupation	0.0000084	18%
Length of service prior to maternity leave	0.0001	14%
Whether or not a single parent	0.0093	7%
Age	0.014	7%
Ethnicity	0.017	6%
Country	0.045	5%

**Table 14. 13: Reported experiencing financial loss dependent variable: odds for each category of importance of being different from average category outcome**

Socio-demographic independent variables	Odds for each category of being different from average category outcome
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<b>Socio-demographic independent variables</b>	<b>Odds for each category of being different from average category outcome</b>
<b>Full or part-time</b>	
<b>Full-time (35+ hours per week)</b>	<b>1.33*</b>
<b>Part-time (Less than 35 hours per week)</b>	<b>0.75*</b>
<b>Sector</b>	
<b>Agriculture, Fishery and Mining</b>	<b>0.71</b>
<b>Manufacturing</b>	<b>1.28</b>
<b>Utilities</b>	<b>2.21</b>
<b>Construction</b>	<b>0.12</b>
<b>Trade</b>	<b>0.83</b>
<b>Hotels and Restaurants</b>	<b>1.01</b>
<b>Transport and Communication</b>	<b>2.09*</b>
<b>Finance</b>	<b>1.49*</b>
<b>Real Estate and Business</b>	<b>1.73*</b>
<b>Public Admin and Defence</b>	<b>0.82</b>
<b>Education</b>	<b>0.9</b>
<b>Health and Social Work</b>	<b>0.96</b>
<b>Other Community</b>	<b>1.24</b>
<b>Occupation</b>	
<b>Managers, directors and senior officials</b>	<b>1.55</b>
<b>Professional occupations</b>	<b>1.47</b>
<b>Associate professional and technical occupations</b>	<b>2.15*</b>
<b>Administrative and secretarial occupations</b>	<b>1.19</b>
<b>Skilled trades occupations</b>	<b>3.16*</b>

<b>Socio-demographic independent variables</b>	<b>Odds for each category of being different from average category outcome</b>
<b>Caring, leisure and other service occupations</b>	<b>1.59</b>
<b>Sales and customer service occupations</b>	<b>1.14</b>
<b>Process, plant and machine operatives</b>	<b>0.04</b>
<b>Elementary occupations</b>	<b>0.8</b>
<b>Length of service prior to maternity leave</b>	
<b>&lt;1year</b>	<b>0.54*</b>
<b>1-2 years</b>	<b>0.93</b>
<b>2-5 years</b>	<b>1.44*</b>
<b>&gt;5 years</b>	<b>1.38*</b>
<b>Single parent</b>	
<b>No</b>	<b>0.78*</b>
<b>Yes</b>	<b>1.28*</b>
	<b>1</b>
<b>Age</b>	
<b>Under 25</b>	<b>1.46*</b>
<b>25-29</b>	<b>0.85</b>
<b>30-34</b>	<b>0.83*</b>
<b>35-39</b>	<b>0.98</b>
<b>40+</b>	<b>0.99</b>
<b>Ethnicity</b>	
<b>White British</b>	<b>0.87*</b>
<b>BAME</b>	<b>1.15*</b>
<b>Country</b>	

<b>Socio-demographic independent variables</b>	<b>Odds for each category of being different from average category outcome</b>
<b>England</b>	<b>1.26*</b>
<b>Scotland</b>	<b>0.81</b>
<b>Wales</b>	<b>0.99</b>

**Table 14. 14: Reported experiencing negative impact on opportunity, status or job security dependent variable: multivariate regression outcome**

<b>Socio-demographic independent variables</b>	<b>P-value multivariate analysis</b>	<b>Importance in multivariate binary regression</b>
Occupation	0.000029	21%
Whether has a child younger than sampled baby	0.0011	14%
Full or part-time	0.0012	13%
Contract Type	0.0036	11%
Length of service prior to maternity leave	0.0063	10%
Whether a member of a trade union	0.012	9%
Whether have a physical or mental condition	0.016	8%
Whether or not a single parent	0.021	8%
Ethnicity	0.045	6%

**Table 14. 15: Reported experiencing negative impact on opportunity, status or job security dependent variable: odds for each category of importance of being different from average category outcome**

<b>Socio-demographic independent variables</b>	<b>Odds for each category of being different from average category outcome</b>
<b>Occupation</b>	
Managers, directors and senior officials	1.03
Professional occupations	0.88
Associate professional and technical occupations	1.09
Administrative and secretarial occupations	0.73*

<b>Socio-demographic independent variables</b>	<b>Odds for each category of being different from average category outcome</b>
<b>Skilled trades occupations</b>	<b>2.37*</b>
<b>Caring, leisure and other service occupations</b>	<b>1.04</b>
<b>Sales and customer service occupations</b>	<b>0.66*</b>
<b>Process, plant and machine operatives</b>	<b>1.56</b>
<b>Elementary occupations</b>	<b>0.54*</b>
<b>Whether has a child younger than sampled baby</b>	
<b>No</b>	<b>0.68*</b>
<b>Yes</b>	<b>1.46*</b>
<b>Full or part time</b>	
<b>Full-time (35+ hours per week)</b>	<b>1.14*</b>
<b>Part-time (Less than 35 hours per week)</b>	<b>0.87*</b>
<b>Contract Type</b>	
<b>Permanent</b>	<b>0.74*</b>
<b>Fixed term</b>	<b>0.94</b>
<b>Agency/casual/zero-hours</b>	<b>1.43*</b>
<b>Length of service prior to maternity leave</b>	
<b>&lt;1 year</b>	<b>0.89</b>
<b>1-2 years</b>	<b>0.92</b>
<b>2-5 years</b>	<b>1.26*</b>
<b>&gt;5 years</b>	<b>0.97</b>
<b>Whether a member of a trade union</b>	
<b>No</b>	<b>0.88*</b>
<b>Yes</b>	<b>1.13*</b>

Socio-demographic independent variables		Odds for each category of being different from average category outcome
<b>Physical or mental health condition</b>		
No		0.85*
Yes		1.18*
<b>Single parent</b>		
Married / living with partner		0.84*
Single parent		1.19*
<b>Ethnicity</b>		
White British		0.91*
BAME		1.1*

**Table 14. 16: Reported experiencing risk or impact on health and welfare job dependent variable: multivariate regression outcome**

Socio-demographic independent variables	P-value multivariate analysis	Importance in multivariate binary regression
Occupation	0.000000043	38%
Length of service prior to maternity leave	0.00028	18%
Whether a member of a trade union	0.00077	16%
Age	0.0091	11%
Whether employer recognised trade union	0.02	9%
Size of employer	0.034	8%

**Table 14. 17: Reported experiencing risk or impact on health and welfare dependent variable: odds for each category of importance of being different from average category outcome**

<b>Socio-demographic independent variables</b>	<b>Odds for each category of being different from average category outcome</b>
<b>Occupation</b>	
<b>Managers, directors and senior officials</b>	<b>1.17</b>
<b>Professional occupations</b>	<b>1.04</b>
<b>Associate professional and technical occupations</b>	<b>0.91</b>
<b>Administrative and secretarial occupations</b>	<b>0.58*</b> <b>5</b>
<b>Skilled trades occupations</b>	<b>1.29</b>
<b>Caring, leisure and other service occupations</b>	<b>1.46*</b>
<b>Sales and customer service occupations</b>	<b>0.74*</b>
<b>Process, plant and machine operatives</b>	<b>1.19</b>
<b>Elementary occupations</b>	<b>0.93</b>
<b>Length of service prior to maternity leave</b>	
<b>&lt;1 year</b>	<b>1.34*</b> <b>0</b>
<b>1-2 years</b>	<b>0.94</b>
<b>2-5 years</b>	<b>1.04</b>
<b>&gt;5 years</b>	<b>0.76*</b>
<b>Whether a member of a trade union</b>	
<b>No</b>	<b>0.82*</b>
<b>Yes</b>	<b>1.23*</b>
<b>Age</b>	

<b>Socio-demographic independent variables</b>	<b>Odds for each category of being different from average category outcome</b>
<b>Under 25</b>	<b>1.22</b>
<b>25-29</b>	<b>1.17*</b>
<b>30-34</b>	<b>0.84*</b>
<b>35-39</b>	<b>0.96</b>
<b>40+</b>	<b>0.87</b>
<b>Whether employer recognised trade union</b>	
<b>No</b>	<b>1.13*</b>
<b>Yes</b>	<b>0.88*</b>
<b>Size of employer</b>	
<b>&lt;10 employees</b>	<b>0.91</b>
<b>10-49 employees</b>	<b>0.99</b>
<b>50-249 employees</b>	<b>1.22*</b>
<b>250+ employees</b>	<b>0.92</b>

**Table 14. 18: Reported experiencing harassment / negative comments job dependent variable: multivariate regression outcome**

<b>Socio-demographic independent variables</b>	<b>P-value multivariate analysis</b>	<b>Importance in multivariate binary regression</b>
<b>Length of service prior to maternity leave</b>	<b>0.0023</b>	<b>28%</b>
<b>Whether has a child younger than sample baby</b>	<b>0.003</b>	<b>27%</b>
<b>Sector</b>	<b>0.0032</b>	<b>26%</b>



Socio-demographic independent variables	P-value multivariate analysis	Importance in multivariate binary regression
Full or part time	0.016	19%

**Table 14. 19: Reported experiencing harassment/negative comments dependent variable: odds for each category of importance of being different from average category outcome**

Socio-demographic independent variables	Odds for each category of being different from average category outcome
<b>Length of service prior to maternity leave</b>	
<1 year	0.93
1-2 years	0.99
2-5 years	1.27*
>5 years	0.86
<b>Whether has a child younger than sample baby</b>	
No	0.69*
Yes	1.44*
<b>Sector</b>	
Agriculture, Fishery and Mining	0.38
Manufacturing	1.56*
Utilities	1.61
Construction	0.75
Trade	1.14
Hotels and Restaurants	0.94

<b>Socio-demographic independent variables</b>	<b>Odds for each category of being different from average category outcome</b>
<b>Transport and Communication</b>	<b>1.79*</b>
<b>Finance</b>	<b>0.85</b>
<b>Real Estate and Business</b>	<b>1.07</b>
<b>Public Admin and Defence</b>	<b>0.99</b>
<b>Education</b>	<b>0.69*</b>
<b>Health and Social Work</b>	<b>1.17</b>
<b>Other Community</b>	<b>1.03</b>
<b>Full or part-time</b>	
<b>Full-time (35+ hours per week)</b>	<b>1.13*</b>
<b>Part-time (Less than 35 hours per week)</b>	<b>0.88*</b>

**Table 14. 20: Reported experiencing negative experience related to breastfeeding job dependent variable: multivariate regression outcome**

<b>Socio-demographic independent variables</b>	<b>P-value multivariate analysis</b>	<b>Importance in multivariate binary regression</b>
<b>Full or part-time</b>	<b>0.00059</b>	<b>19%</b>
<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>0.00078</b>	<b>18%</b>
<b>Religion</b>	<b>0.0014</b>	<b>17%</b>
<b>Whether employer recognised trade union</b>	<b>0.0018</b>	<b>16%</b>
<b>Sector</b>	<b>0.0098</b>	<b>12%</b>
<b>Occupation</b>	<b>0.017</b>	<b>10%</b>

**Table 14. 21: Reported experiencing negative experience related to breastfeeding dependent variable: odds for each category of importance of being different from average category outcome**

<b>Socio-demographic independent variables</b>	<b>Odds for each category of being different from average category outcome</b>
<b>Full or part time</b>	
Full-time (35+ hours per week)	1.34*
Part-time (Less than 35 hours per week)	0.74*
<b>Ethnicity</b>	
White British	0.73*
BAME	1.36*
<b>Religion</b>	
Christian	1.72*
Other religion	0.46*
No religion	1.25
<b>Whether employer recognised trade union</b>	
No	0.76*
Yes	1.31*
<b>Sector</b>	
Agriculture, Fishery and Mining/Manufacturing/Utilities	0.44
Trade	1.02
Hotels and Restaurants	2.67*
Transport and Communication	0.41
Finance	1.43
Real Estate and Business	1.31

<b>Socio-demographic independent variables</b>	<b>Odds for each category of being different from average category outcome</b>
<b>Public Admin and Defence</b>	<b>0.58</b>
<b>Education</b>	<b>0.94</b>
<b>Health and Social Work</b>	<b>1.33</b>
<b>Other Community</b>	<b>1.52</b>
<b>Occupation</b>	
<b>Managers, directors and senior officials</b>	<b>0.98</b>
<b>Professional occupations</b>	<b>1.82*</b>
<b>Associate professional and technical occupations</b>	<b>1.13</b>
<b>Administrative and secretarial occupations</b>	<b>1.23</b>
<b>Caring, leisure and other service occupations</b>	<b>0.99</b>
<b>Sales and customer service occupations</b>	<b>1.47</b>
<b>Skilled trades occupations/Process, plant and machine operatives</b>	<b>0.28*</b>

**Table 14. 22: Reported experiencing negative experience related to flexible work requests job dependent variable: multivariate regression outcome**

<b>Socio-demographic independent variables</b>	<b>P-value multivariate analysis</b>	<b>Importance in multivariate binary regression</b>
<b>Sector</b>	<b>0.000037</b>	<b>33%</b>
<b>Whether employer recognised trade union</b>	<b>0.0012</b>	<b>21%</b>
<b>Salary</b>	<b>0.0052</b>	<b>17%</b>
<b>Length of service prior to maternity leave</b>	<b>0.0085</b>	<b>15%</b>

Socio-demographic independent variables	P-value multivariate analysis	Importance in multivariate binary regression
Age	0.012	14%

**Table 14. 23: Reported experiencing negative experience related to flexible work requests dependent variable: odds for each category of importance of being different from average category outcome**

Socio-demographic independent variables	Odds for each category of being different from average category outcome
<b>Sector</b>	
Agriculture, Fishery and Mining/Manufacturing/Utilities	1.69*
Trade	1.43*
Hotels and Restaurants	0.36*
Transport and Communication	1.02
Finance	1.53*
Real Estate and Business	0.98
Public Admin and Defence	0.72
Education	0.76
Health and Social Work	0.79
Other Community	1.78*
<b>Whether employer recognised trade union</b>	
No	1.28*
Yes	0.78*
<b>Salary</b>	

<b>Socio-demographic independent variables</b>	<b>Odds for each category of being different from average category outcome</b>
<b>Up to £9,999</b>	<b>0.58*</b>
<b>£10,000-£19,999</b>	<b>0.74*</b>
<b>£20,000-£29,999</b>	<b>1.06</b>
<b>£30,000-£39,999</b>	<b>1.06</b>
<b>£40,000-£59,999</b>	<b>1.42</b>
<b>£60,000+</b>	<b>1.49</b>
<b>Length of service prior to maternity leave</b>	
<b>&lt;1 year</b>	<b>0.86</b>
<b>1-2 years</b>	<b>1.14</b>
<b>2-5 years</b>	<b>1.26*</b>
<b>5+ years</b>	<b>0.8</b>
<b>Age</b>	
<b>Under 25</b>	<b>1.08</b>
<b>25-29</b>	<b>1.4*</b>
<b>30-34</b>	<b>0.8</b>
<b>35-39</b>	<b>0.88</b>
<b>40+</b>	<b>0.94</b>

**Table 14. 24: Reported experiencing other negative experience dependent variable: multivariate regression outcome**

<b>Socio-demographic independent variables</b>	<b>P-value multivariate analysis</b>	<b>Importance in multivariate binary regression</b>
<b>Occupation</b>	<b>0.00059</b>	<b>19%</b>
<b>Age</b>	<b>0.00078</b>	<b>18%</b>
<b>Size of employer</b>	<b>0.0014</b>	<b>17%</b>
<b>Whether have a physical or mental health condition</b>	<b>0.0018</b>	<b>16%</b>
<b>Length of service prior to maternity leave</b>	<b>0.0098</b>	<b>12%</b>
<b>Whether has a child younger than sample baby</b>	<b>0.017</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>Whether or not a single parent</b>	<b>0.027</b>	<b>9%</b>

**Table 14. 25: Reported experiencing other negative experience dependent variable: odds for each category of importance of being different from average category outcome**

<b>Socio-demographic independent variables</b>	<b>Odds for each category of being different from average category outcome</b>
<b>Occupation</b>	
<b>Managers, directors and senior officials</b>	<b>1.19</b>
<b>Professional occupations</b>	<b>0.88</b>
<b>Associate professional and technical occupations</b>	<b>1.13</b>
<b>Administrative and secretarial occupations</b>	<b>0.86</b>

<b>Socio-demographic independent variables</b>	<b>Odds for each category of being different from average category outcome</b>
<b>Skilled trades occupations</b>	<b>1.94</b>
<b>Caring, leisure and other service occupations</b>	<b>1.4*</b>
<b>Sales and customer service occupations</b>	<b>0.92</b>
<b>Process, plant and machine operatives</b>	<b>0.52</b>
<b>Elementary occupations</b>	<b>0.76</b>
<b>Age</b>	
<b>Under 25</b>	<b>1.19</b>
<b>25-29</b>	<b>1.26*</b>
<b>30-34</b>	<b>0.86*</b>
<b>35-39</b>	<b>1.06</b>
<b>40+</b>	<b>0.73*</b>
<b>Size of Employer</b>	
<b>&lt;10 employees</b>	<b>0.9</b>
<b>10-49 employees</b>	<b>0.84*</b>
<b>50-249 employees</b>	<b>1.28*</b>
<b>250+ employees</b>	<b>1.03</b>
<b>Physical or mental health condition</b>	
<b>No</b>	<b>0.8*</b>
<b>Yes</b>	<b>1.25*</b>
<b>Length of service prior to maternity leave</b>	
<b>&lt;1 year</b>	<b>0.89</b>
<b>1-2 years</b>	<b>1.08</b>
<b>2-5 years</b>	<b>1.18*</b>



Socio-demographic independent variables	Odds for each category of being different from average category outcome
>5 years	0.88
<b>Whether has a child younger than sampled baby</b>	
No	0.75*
Yes	1.34*
<b>Single Parent</b>	
Married/living with partner	0.84*
Single parent	1.2*

**Table 14. 26: Reported experiencing any negative experience dependent variable: multivariate regression outcome**

Socio-demographic independent variables	P-value multivariate analysis	Importance in multivariate binary regression
Length of service prior to maternity leave	0.00019	27%
Occupation	0.00036	25%
Whether full or part-time	0.0043	17%
Age	0.026	12%
Whether member of a trade union	0.048	10%
First time mother	0.049	10%

**Table 14. 27: Reported experiencing any negative experience dependent variable: odds for each category of importance of being different from average category outcome**

<b>Socio-demographic independent variables</b>	<b>Odds for each category of being different from average category outcome</b>
<b>Length of service prior to maternity leave</b>	
<1 year	1.01
1-2 years	1.04
2-5 years	1.24*
5+ years	0.78*
<b>Occupation</b>	
Managers, directors and senior officials	0.97
Professional occupations	1.07
Associate professional and technical occupations	1.16
Administrative and secretarial occupations	0.75
Skilled trades occupations	1.79
Caring, leisure and other service occupations	1.43*
Sales and customer service occupations	0.75
Process, plant and machine operatives	0.89
Elementary occupations	0.64*
<b>Full or part-time</b>	
Full-time (35+ hours per week)	1.17*
Part-time (Less than 35 hours per week)	0.85*
<b>Age</b>	
Under 25	1.19
25-29	1.24*

<b>Socio-demographic independent variables</b>	<b>Odds for each category of being different from average category outcome</b>
<b>30-34</b>	<b>0.89</b>
<b>35-39</b>	<b>1.04</b>
<b>40+</b>	<b>0.74</b>
<b>Member of a trade union</b>	
<b>No</b>	<b>0.89*</b>
<b>Yes</b>	<b>1.13*</b>
<b>First time mother</b>	
<b>No</b>	<b>1.11*</b>
<b>Yes</b>	<b>0.9*</b>

# 15. Annex B: Survey of mothers' questionnaire

## S Screener

ASK PERSON WHO ANSWERS PHONE

S1 Good morning / afternoon / evening. My name is NAME and I'm calling from IFF Research. Please can I speak to [NAME]?

ADD IF NECESSARY: [NAME] kindly agreed to participate in research we are conducting on behalf of the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) and the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC). [NAME] filled in a questionnaire giving us her contact details so we could contact her to complete the survey.]

Respondent answers phone	1	CONTINUE
Transferred to respondent	2	
Hard appointment	3	MAKE APPOINTMENT
Soft Appointment	4	
Refusal	5	CLOSE
Not available in deadline	6	
Engaged	7	
Fax Line	8	
No reply / Answer phone	9	
Business Number	10	
Dead line	11	

ASK NAMED RESPONDENT

S2 Good morning / afternoon, my name is NAME, calling from IFF Research, an independent research company.

I'm calling because you recently completed a short questionnaire [IF ONLINE: online; IF POSTAL; which you posted back to us] where you kindly agreed to take part in some research about being a mother in the Twenty First Century. The research is among the mothers of babies and young children and is specifically about their experience of working while pregnant and since the birth of their baby.

IFF is undertaking the research on behalf of the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) and the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC).

The research results will be used to help women who are working while pregnant and also working mothers and their families. We would be very grateful for your participation.

The telephone survey will take around 30 minutes to complete. We could go through it now or I could arrange a convenient time during the day or evening to call you back.

IF ASKS FOR MORE INFORMATION ON HOW THE RESEARCH WILL BE USED: the research will be used to explore how far the employment rights of women who are pregnant, on maternity leave or returning to work are being followed. The research results will be used widely - by various government departments, independent public bodies such as the EHRC and also by organisations that provide advice and support on employment rights.

IF SAYS DOES NOT WORK NOW: It doesn't matter if you went back to work or not after your baby was born, or if you are working now or not. We are interested in all perspectives.

IF ASKED WHERE GOT CONTACT DETAILS FROM: At the end of the questionnaire you gave us your telephone number so we could call you so you could complete this telephone survey.

IF CAN'T REMEMBER THE INITIAL QUESTIONNAIRE: the questionnaire you completed was called 'Survey into the experience of being a mother in the Twenty-First Century'. It was four pages long and asked about your age, the age of your youngest baby and whether you had worked at all when pregnant.

Continue	1	CONTINUE
Hard appointment	2	MAKE APPOINTMENT
Soft appointment	3	
Refusal	4	THANK AND CLOSE
Refusal – taken part in recent survey	5	

Send reassurance email from Dimensions	6	MAKE APPOINTMENT
Needs reassurances	7	GO TO REASSURANCE

S3 This call may be recorded for quality and training purposes only.

### REASSURANCES TO USE IF NECESSARY

The interview will take around 30 minutes to complete.

Please note that all data will be reported in aggregate form and your answers will not be reported to our client in any way that would allow you to be identified.

If respondent wishes to confirm validity of survey or get more information about aims and objectives, they can call:

- MRS: Market Research Society
- IFF: Alice Large or Helen Rossiter
- BIS: Tom Howe

## A Demographics

Ask all [Q2]

In the initial questionnaire you [IF ONLINE: completed online; IF POSTAL; posted back to us] you gave us some information regarding your age and the age of your baby. I just need to check we have the correct information.

Ask all

**A1 Can I just confirm, how many children you have, excluding any that are adopted or you are fostering? How many do you have aged...**

READ OUT. CODE ONE PER ROW

Under 9 months (SPECIFY HOW MANY)	

Aged 9 – 26 months (SPECIFY HOW MANY)	IF ZERO THANK AND CLOSE
Aged over 26 months (SPECIFY HOW MANY)	

A2

A3 **DELETED**

A4 **DELETED**

ask if more than one child AGED 9-26 MONTHS (a1\_2/>1) [Q4]

A5 **Are your children aged 9-26 months...?**

read out. ALLOW MULTICODE

Twins	1	
[IF A1_2/>2] Triplets	2	
[IF A1_2/>3] Quads	3	
Different ages	4	
DO NOT READ OUT: Other (please specify)	5	
DO NOT READ OUT: Don't know	6	

ask all [Q5]

ask if only one child aged 9-26 months (A1\_2/'1')

A6 **Please can you tell me the month and year that your child aged 9-26 months was born in?**

ask if MORE THAN ONE CHILD AGED 9 – 26 MONTHS – NOT MULTIPLES (a4/4)

Of your children that fall into the 9 to 26 month age bracket, please can you tell me the month and year that the youngest was born in?

ask if MORE THAN ONE CHILD AGED 9 – 26 MONTHS MULTIPLES (a4/1-3 OR 5-6)

Please can you tell me the month and year that your youngest children aged 9 to 26 months were born in?

For the remainder of the questionnaire we are interested in your experiences when pregnant and on maternity leave with [IF ONLY ONE CHILD OR MORE THAN ONE CHILD BUT NOT MULTIPLES (A1\_2/'1' OR A4/4): this child.] [IF MORE THAN ONE CHILD AND MULTIPLES (A4/1-3 OR 4-5): these children],

ENTER MONTH	ENTER YEAR
-------------	------------

Don't know / Can't remember year	X
----------------------------------	---

If Don't know exact number – prompt with ranges

9-12 months	1	
13-17 months	2	
18-24 months	3	
24+ months	4	
Don't know	5	
Refused	6	

ask all [Q6]

A7 [IF ANSWERING ABOUT 1 CHILD AT A5: A1\_2/'1' OR A4/4] And was your child born in [MONTH, YEAR FROM A5]...?

[IF ANSWERING ABOUT 1 CHILD AT A5: A1\_2/'1' OR A4/4 AND A5RANGE/4 OR 5]: And was your child...?

[IF ANSWERING ABOUT MULTIPLES A5: A4/1-3] And were your children born in [MONTH, YEAR FROM A5]...?

IF ANSWERING ABOUT MULTIPLES A5: A4/1-3 AND A5RANGE/4 OR 5]: And were your children?

READ OUT. CODE ONE ONLY



Born on or after their due date	1	
Born before their due date	2	
Refused	3	
Don't know / Can't remember	4	

ask those whose baby was born before due date (A6/2)

**A8 At how many weeks [IF A4/1-3:were your children born; IF A1\_2/'1' OR A4/4: was your child born]?**

prompt if necessary. code one only

Before 37 weeks (specify)	1	
37-39 weeks	2	
40 weeks or later	3	
Don't know / Can't remember	4	

ask all

**A9 [IF 1 CHILD 9-26 MONTHS – A1\_2/'1' OR MORE THAN ONE BUT NOT MULTIPLES A4/4]: Please could you tell me the name of your child born on [MONTH, YEAR FROM A5]?**

[IF 2+CHILDREN – NOT MULTIPLES A4/4 AND A5RANGE/4 OR 5]: Please could you tell me the name of your child?

[IF 2+CHILDREN –MULTIPLES A4/1-3]: Please could you tell me the names of your children born on [MONTH, YEAR FROM A5]? [IF 2+CHILDREN –MULTIPLES A4/1-3 AND A5RANGE/4 OR 5]: Please could you tell me the names of your children?

**A10 ADD IF NECESSARY: We are only asking the name of your child so that we can include it in some questions to make the wording more straightforward...**

INTERVIEWER: ENTER NAME OF CHILD INTO BOXES

Child 1 (specify)	1	
-------------------	---	--

[IF A4=1] Child 2 (specify)	2	
[IF A4=2] Child 3 (specify)	3	
[IF A4=3] Child 4 (specify)	4	
Refused	5	

A11

<b>A8 DUM 1 – AGE NAME GIVEN (INTERNAL USE ONLY)</b>		
Age of child given	1	A5/ NOT DK/REF
Name of child given	2	A8/1-4
None of the above	3	ALL NOT IN GROUPS 1 OR 2 AT A8DUM1
<b>A8 DUM2 – TEXT SUB TO USE THROUGHOUT QUESTIONNAIRE WHEN PROMPTING WITH NAME/AGE OF BABY (INTERNAL USE ONLY)</b>		
Insert name of child(ren) given at A8 as text sub	1	A8 DUM1/ 2
Insert as text sub: 'your child born in [INSERT a5month / INSERT a5year]' if one part of these are DK then please leave DK part blank, if both are DK then please use text sub 3 below	2	A8 DUM/ 1 AND NOT 2
Insert as a text sub: your child aged 9 – 26 months OR your youngest child in the 9-26 age range	3	A8DUM1/3

ask all [Q6]

A12 **At any stage while you were pregnant with [AGE OR NAME OF CHILD FROM A8DUM2] were you working...?**

READ OUT. CODE ONE PER ROW

	YES	NO	
_1 As an employee	1	2	IF NO THANK AND CLOSE
_2 On a self-employed basis	1	2	

DS – IF A9\_1/2 THANK AND CLOSE

ask all

A13 **And which one of the following best describes your CURRENT SITUATION. Are you...**

read out. CODE ONE ONLY

On maternity leave ADD IF NECESSARY: including paid or unpaid maternity leave, using accumulated annual leave as part of maternity leave or using parental leave	1	
In work – for THE SAME employer you worked for before the birth of your baby	2	
In work – for A DIFFERENT employer you worked for before the birth of your baby	3	
In work – on a self-employed basis	4	
Not in work – and currently looking for work	5	
Not in work – and taking a sabbatical/career break	6	
Not in work – and not currently looking for work	7	
In education or training	8	
Other (specify)	9	

DS: A10A, A10B and A10C ARE DUMMY VARS which COME AFTER A13

ask ALL on mat leave where baby at a5 is aged 18M+ AND HAS YOUNGER CHILDREN (CHILD OVER 18M from A5 AND A10/1 and a1\_1/>0)

A14 **And can I just check, are you on maternity leave for [INSERT NAME OR AGE OF BABY AS PER A8DUM2] or for a younger child?**

On maternity leave for INSERT NAME OR AGE OF BABY AS PER A8DUM2	1	
---	---	--

On maternity leave for a younger child	2	
Refused	3	

ask ALL NOT WORKING FOR THE SAME EMPLOYER AS BEFORE BIRTH OF BABY (A10/3-9 OR a9/1 and a11/2-3)

A15 And after the birth of [INSERT NAME OR AGE OF BABY AS PER A8DUM2] did you return to work...

READ OUT. code one only

For the same employer as you worked for while pregnant	1	
For a different employer	2	
On a self-employed basis	3	
OR did you not return to work at all?	4	

ask ALL NOT ON MATERNITY LEAVE (a10/2-10)

A16 And after the birth of [INSERT NAME OR AGE OF BABY AS PER A8DUM2] did you go on maternity leave from the employer you worked for while pregnant...

Yes	1	
No	2	

A10A DUMMY VAR – RETURN TO WORK AFTER BIRTH OF CHILD

RETURNED TO WORK FOR SAME EMPLOYER	1	A10/2 OR A12/1
RETURNED TO WORK FOR DIFFERENT EMPLOYER	2	A12/2
RETURNED TO WORK – SELF EMPLOYED ONLY	3	A12/3
STILL ON MATERNITY LEAVE	4	A10/1
DID NOT RETURN TO WORK	5	A12/4

A10B DUMMY VAR – CURRENT WORK STATUS

IN WORK FOR SAME EMPLOYER AS BEFORE BIRTH OF BABY	1	A10/2
IN WORK FOR DIFFERENT EMPLOYER AS BEFORE BIRTH OF BABY	2	A10/3
IN WORK – SELF EMPLOYED ONLY	3	A10/4
ON MATERNITY LEAVE- FOR SAMPLED CHILD	4	A10/1
ON MATERNITY LEAVE- FOR A YOUNGER CHILD	5	A11/2-3
NOT IN WORK	6	A10/5-9

A10C DUMMY VAR – HAD/ON MATERNITY LEAVE

Yes – Currently on Mat Leave OR had one but finished	1	A10/1 OR A13/1
No – have not had a Mat Leave at any point	2	A13/2

ask all [Q13]

A17 And choosing from the following ranges, what was your age last birthday?

prompt with ranges

Under 20 years	1	
20-24	2	
25-29	3	
30-34	4	
35-39	5	
40-44	6	
45 or older	7	
Refused	8	

ASK ALL

A18 At the time when you became pregnant with [INSERT NAME OR AGE OF BABY AS PER A8DUM2] were you working as a paid employee for an organisation?

Yes	1	
No	2	

ASK THOSE IN EMPLOYMENT AT START OF PREGNANCY (A15/1) [Q18]

A19 How long had you worked for this employer, before the birth of [INSERT NAME OR AGE OF BABY AS PER A8DUM2]

INTERVIEWER: ENTER NUMBER OF YEARS + NUMBER OF MONTHS IN APPROPRIATE BOXES (E.G. '3' YEARS AND '6' MONTHS)

ENTER NUMBER OF YEARS: ALLOW  
0-99

ENTER NUMBER OF MONTHS:  
ALLOW 0-11 AND ALLOW DK

Don't know / Can't remember

X

ASK THOSE NOT IN WORK WHEN FIRST PREGNANT (a15/2)

A20 How many weeks into your pregnancy did you become employed?

ENTER NUMBER: ALLOW 1-38

If Don't know exact number – prompt with ranges

1 – 4 weeks	1
5 – 8 weeks	2
9 – 12 weeks	3
13 – 16 weeks	4
17 – 20 weeks	5
21- 24 weeks	6
25 - 28 weeks	7
29 – 32 weeks	8
33 or more weeks	9
Don't know	10
Refused	11

ASK ALL

A21 While you were pregnant did you work in paid employment for...?

IF SAY WORK FOR AN AGENCY: If you were employed through a temping agency while pregnant please count each place where you worked as a separate employer.

One employer only in paid employment	1	
Two or more employers in paid employment (specify how many)	2	

ASK those working for two or more employers (A18/2)

A22 **And thinking about the [INSERT NUMBER OF JOBS FROM A18] jobs, at any point were you working for more than one employer in paid employment at once?**

Yes – worked for more than one employer in paid employment at once	1	
No – never worked for more than one employer in paid employment at once when pregnant.	2	

ASK those working for more than one employer at once (A19/1)

A23 **And, at the last point at which you were employed before the birth of your baby were you working in one paid job only or doing more than one paid job at the same time?**

Doing one paid job only	1	
Doing more than one paid job (specify how many)	2	

## B Paid Employment Before Childbirth

I'd now like to ask you a few questions about the LAST PAID JOB you were in before the birth of [INSERT NAME OR AGE OF BABY AS PER A8DUM2]].

IF WORKED FOR 2+ EMPLOYERS AT ONCE DURING LAST PAID EMPLOYMENT WHILE PREGNANT (A20/2): You said you were working in [INSERT NUMBER OF JOBS FROM A20] paid jobs at once at the last point at which you were pregnant before the birth of your baby. For the next few questions please answer in relation to the job you considered to be your MAIN JOB.



IF RETURNED TO WORK FOR SAME EMPLOYER AFTER BIRTH OF BABY (A10A/1): If you returned to this job since having your baby, please note that we are interested here in the details of your job as it was BEFORE the birth of your baby.

If you were working for a temping agency please answer the next few questions in relation to the post you had for the majority of the time you were pregnant NOT the temping agency itself.

ask all [Q14]

**B1 What was your job title in the last job role you worked in before the birth of your baby?**

INTERVIEWER PROBE FOR FULL DETAILS.

E.G. IF RESPONDENT IS "SUPERVISOR" ASK WHAT KIND OF ACTIVITIES THEY SUPERVISE, IF 'ASSISTANT, WHAT SORT OF ASSISTANT?

WRITE IN. TO BE CODED TO 4 DIGIT SOC 2010. ALLOW REFUSED.

ask all [Q14]

**B2 What were your main duties or responsibilities?**

INTERVIEWER PROBE FOR FULL DETAILS.

did respondent manage any staff? if so how many?

WHAT DEPARTMENT WERE THEY IN?

WRITE IN. TO BE CODED TO 4 DIGIT SOC 2010. ALLOW REFUSED.

ask all [Q15]

**B3 What is the main activity of the business you worked for?**

INTERVIEWER PROBE:

- **What is the main product or service of this establishment?**

WRITE IN. TO BE CODED TO 2 DIGIT SIC 2007. ALLOW REFUSED.

ask all [Q16]

**B4** Approximately how many people worked for your employer at the site that you worked at, excluding temporary or casual staff?

PROMPT IF NECESSARY. CODE ONE ONLY.

Between 1 and 5 people	1	
Between 6 and 9 people	2	
Between 10 and 24 people	3	
Between 25 and 49 people	4	
Between 50 and 99 people	5	
Between 100 and 249 people	6	
250+ people	7	
Don't know	8	

ask all [Q16a]

**B5** Which of the following best describes the type of contract that you had?

read out. code one only

IF ASKED ABOUT ZERO HOURS: A zero hour contract is a contract where the employer does not guarantee to provide the worker with work and will only pay the worker for those hours which are actually worked.

Permanent	1	
Fixed Term Contract	2	

Agency work	3	
Casual Work	4	
Zero-hours contract	5	
DO NOT READ OUT: Other (specify)	6	
DO NOT READ OUT: Don't know	7	

ask all WHO were on a fixed term contract (B5/2)

B5A Was this a fixed term contract for a specific one off project / period of time OR was it one where your contract was 'rolled over' annually or periodically?

PROMPT IF NECESSARY. CODE ONE ONLY.

For a specific / one off project or period	1	
'Rolled over' annually / periodically	2	
Other (specify)	3	
DO NOT READ OUT: Don't know	4	

ask all WHO were on a fixed term contract who did not have a maternity leave with employer worked for when pregnant (B5/2 AND A10C/2)

B5B Earlier you mentioned you had not been on maternity leave from the employer you worked for when pregnant. Was this because your contract ended while you were pregnant or for another reason?

CODE ONE ONLY.

Yes – contract ended while pregnant so not entitled to maternity leave	1	
No – another reason for not having a maternity leave (specify)	2	
Don't know / can't remember	3	
Refused	4	

ask all

**B6 And at the time you told your employer you were pregnant, how many hours a week did you work, including paid or unpaid overtime and excluding meal breaks?**

INTERVIEWER NOTE: IF VARIED ASK FOR ANSWER IN RELATION TO TYPICAL WEEK

ENTER NUMBER: ALLOW 1-99

If Don't know exact number – prompt with ranges

10 hours a week or less	1
11-15 hours	2
16-20 hours	3
21-25 hours	4
26-30 hours	5
31-35 hours	6
36-40 hours	7
41-50 hours	8
51-60 hours	9
61-70 hours	10
More than 70 hours a week	11
Don't know	12
Refused	13

ask all [Q17]

**B7 Choosing from the following bands, before tax, how much did you earn in that job? You can give me an answer per year, per month or per week.**

INTERVIEWER INSTRUCTION: START AT CODE 4 '£10,000–£19,999 a year' AND ASK IF THEY EARN MORE OR LESS THAN THAT – THEN GO FROM THERE TO REACH THE APPROPRIATE BAND AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE. PLEASE NOTE NOT ALL THE CODES HAVE TO BE READ OUT.

READ OUT. CODE ONE ONLY.

Up to £2,999 a year / up to £249 a month / up to £57 a week	1
£3,000 - £4,999 a year / £250 - £416 a month / £58 - £96 a week	2
£5,000 - £9,999 a year / £417-£833 a month / £97 - £192 a week	3
£10,000 - £19,999 a year / £834-£1,666 a month / £193 - £384 a week	4
£20,000 - £29,999 a year / £1,666 - £2,499 a month / £385 - £577 a week	5
£30,000 - £39,999 a year / £2,500-£3,333 a month / £578 - £769 a week	6
£40,000 - £49,999 a year / £3,333 - £4,166 a month / £770 - £958 a week	7
£50,000 - £59,999 a year / £4,167 - £4,999 a month / £959 - £1,150 a week	8
£60,000 - £69,999 a year / £5,000 - £5,832 a month / £1,151 - £1,342 a week	9
£70,000 - £79,999 a year / £5,833 - £6,665 a month / £1,343 - £1,533 a week	10
£80,000 - £89,999 a year / £6,666 - £7,499 a month / £1,534 - £1,725 a week	11
£90,000 - £99,999 a year / £7,500- £8,332 a month / £1,726 - £1,917 a week	12
£100,000 a year or more / £8,333 a month or more / £1,918 a week or more	13
Don't Know	9
Refused	0

B8 DELETED

B8a DELETED

ask all

B9 **And overall would you say your employer was supportive of your needs as someone who was working while pregnant. Would you say...?**

READ OUT. CODE ONE ONLY.

They supported your needs willingly	1	
They supported your needs but somewhat reluctantly	2	
They supported your needs but very reluctantly	3	
They did not support your needs	4	
DO NOT READ OUT: Don't know	5	

ask if support wAs given reluctantly or not supported (B9/2-4) [Q30b -NEW PRECODES – SEE COMMENTS]

B10 **Why do you say that?**

DO NOT READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY.

Unsympathetic / gave no consideration to pregnancy	1	
No health & safety checks undertaken	2	
No reduction in workload	3	
Employer did not reduce number of hours worked when asked	4	
Employer did not grant flexible working when asked	5	
Employer reluctant to pay full / any maternity entitlement	6	
Experienced negative comments / rudeness from employer	7	
Opinion less valued / thought less of by employer	8	

Other (specify)	9	
Don't know	10	

ask all [Q21]

**B11 Thinking about when you told your employer that you were pregnant, would you say that they....**

	Yes - definitely	Yes – to some extent	Not completely	Not at all	Don't know
ONLY THOSE WHO HAD / ARE ON MATERNITY LEAVE (A10C/1): _1 were happy about letting you take maternity leave	1	2	3	4	5
_2 Put you under pressure to hand in your notice	1	2	3	4	5
_3 Equally valued you as an employee compared with before you told them you were pregnant	1	2	3	4	5

ask all

**B12x As a result of your pregnancy did you ask for any of the following...?**

read OUT. CODE ONE FOR EACH.

	YES	NO	DK
_1 More flexibility in terms of the hours you worked?	1	2	3

_2 To start later or finish earlier in the day?	1	2	3
_3 More breaks (e.g. rest or toilet breaks)?	1	2	3

ask all [Q30]

**B12 As a result of your pregnancy...**

ADD AS NECESSARY: If you do not have a line manager please answer about the person who has overall responsibility for managing your work on a day-to-day basis such as a head of department or other director or owner of the business.

read OUT. CODE one for each

	YES	NO	DK	NA
_1 Was your line manager more sympathetic about the tasks you were asked to perform?	1	2	3	4
ONLY SHOW IF B12x_1 = 1: _2 Were you allowed more flexibility in terms of the hours you worked?	1	2	3	4
ONLY SHOW IF B12x_2 = 1: _3 Were you allowed to start later or finish earlier in the day?	1	2	3	4
ONLY SHOW IF B12x_3 = 1: _4 Were you allowed more breaks (e.g. rest or toilet breaks)?	1	2	3	4
_6 Were you treated with less respect by your line manager?	1	2	3	4
_7 Did you have to change or cut down on certain duties	1	2	3	4
_8 Were you treated less favourably in some other way	1	2	3	4

ask all



B13x After you told your employer you were pregnant, did your employer initiate a discussion with you about the potential risks to you or your baby in relation to the job that you do? ADD IF NECESSARY: We are interested in whether the risks (or lack of risks) were discussed even if the outcome of this was that there were no risks.

Yes	1	
No	2	
Don't know	3	

ask if discussion about risks was had (B13X/1) [Q22]

B13 After you told your employer you were pregnant, did they make you aware of any risks to you or your baby in relation to the job that you do?

Yes	1	
No	2	
Don't know	3	

B14 **DELETED**

ask if risks identified by employer (b13/1) [Q23]

B15 And thinking about the risks that were identified would you say that your employer...?

READ OUT. CODE ONE ONLY.

Tackled all the risks	1	
Tackled some of the risks but not all	2	
Tackled none of the risks / took no action	3	
DO NOT READ OUT: Don't know	4	

ask if some/all risks resolved (b15/1-2) [Q24]

**B16 What did your employer actually do to manage the risks?**

do not read out. code all that apply

Moved me to another job	1	
Suspended me ON FULL PAY	2	
Suspended me WITHOUT PAY	3	
Changed shift pattern / hours worked	4	
Changed work environment (e.g. new chair, moved to ground floor)	5	
Amended work duties (specify how)	6	
Took other action (specify)	7	
Don't know	8	

B17

**B18 DELETED**

ask all [Q27]

**B19 Did you identify any risks, which were not identified by your employer?**

Yes	1	
No	2	
Don't know	3	

ask if did identify risks themselves (b18/1) [Q28]

**B20 Did you raise the risks which you identified yourself with your employer?**

Yes	1	
No	2	
Don't know	3	

B21 DELETED

B22 DELETED

ask if did identify risks themselves AND RAised with EMPLOYER (b19/1)

**B23 And thinking about the risks you raised would you say that your employer...?**

READ OUT. CODE ONE ONLY.

Tackled all the risks	1	
Tackled some of the risks but not all	2	
Tackled none of the risks / took no action	3	
DO NOT READ OUT: Don't know	4	

B24 DELETED

ask THOSE WHERE EMPLOYERS DID NOT RESOLVE ALL/ANY RISKS (B15/2-3 or b22/2-3)

**B25 As a result of being in a situation where risks in he workplace had been identified but not resolved did you do any of the following?**

read OUT. CODE all that apply

	YES	NO	DK
_1 Start your maternity leave earlier than you would have ideally wanted	1	2	3
_2 Take sickness leave	1	2	3
_3 Make informal arrangements with colleagues to swap duties	1	2	3
_4 Carry on working despite the risks	1	2	3
_5 Leave the organisation	1	2	3

_6 Some other action (specify in box on next page)	1	2	3
--	---	---	---

ask ALL

**B26 How far did treatment by your colleagues, line manager or employer negatively impact on your physical health or stress levels during pregnancy? Would you say...**

Not at all	1	
Very little	2	
Quite a bit	3	
A great deal	4	
Don't know	5	

ask those who were negatively impacted (B25/3-4)

**B27 Was your physical health or stress levels negatively impacted because of any of the following reasons...**

READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY.

You were expected to work at the same pace or work the same number of hours as before pregnancy	1	
They did not accommodate any extra needs of being pregnant, for example more rest breaks or less strenuous tasks	2	
You experienced negative comments or attitudes from colleagues	3	
You experienced negative comments or attitudes from your line manager or employer	4	
You lost your job or feared that you would lose your job	5	
You experienced stress or worry about	6	

colleagues talking about you negatively behind your back		
You experienced disputes with your line manager or employer relating to pregnancy	7	
Some other reason (specify)	8	
DO NOT READ OUT: None of the above	9	
DO NOT READ OUT: Don't know	10	

B28 **DELETED**

B29

## C Requests made about flexible working / alteration to job role

ask ALL [Q60 & NEW precodes]

**C1 We're interested in any flexible working requests you might have made to your employer. Thinking about the period from when you first told your employer you were pregnant to now, have you made any requests to....**

read out. code ONE PER ROW

	Yes	No
_1 Work part-time instead of fulltime	1	2
_2 Reduce your working hours in some other way	1	2
_3 Work flexi-hours	1	2
_4 Make fewer business trips taking you away from your usual place of work	1	2
_5 Work from home or to work from home more frequently	1	2
_6 Do some other form of flexible working	1	2

C2 DELETED

C3 DELETED

ask for each request made at C1 during return to work [Q61 & NEW precodes]

C4 **And was this something that was approved straightaway, approved but only after some discussion, approved only after internal appeal grievance procedure, or not approved at all?**

read out – code one response for each statement

	Approved straightaway	Approved but only after some discussion	Approved – only after internal appeal grievance procedure	NOT Approved at all	NO DECISION YET	DK
_1 Work part-time instead of full-time	1	2	3	4	5	6
_2 Reduce your working hours in some other way	1	2	3	4	5	6
_3 Work flexi-hours	1	2	3	4	5	6
_4 Make fewer business trips taking you away from your usual place of work	1	2	3	4	5	6
_5 Work from home or to work from home more frequently	1	2	3	4	5	6
_6 Do some other form of flexible working	1	2	3	4	5	6

ask THOSE WHERE REQUESTS APPROVED (1-3 AT \_1 to \_6 at C4)

C5 **As a result of your request(s) being approved which of the following negative consequences, if any, have there been. Have you...**

READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY.

Received negative comments from employer or colleagues	1	
Got fewer opportunities than would have been / than other colleagues at same level	2	
Been given 'more junior' tasks than before	3	
Felt your opinion was less valued or taken less seriously	4	
Felt uncomfortable asking for time off or additional flexibility	5	
DO NOT READ OUT: None of the above	7	
DO NOT READ OUT: Don't know	8	

ask for each request not made at C1 and \_6 to appear for all [Q62 & NEW precodes]

C6 **Thinking about the areas where you did not make a request to work flexibly, would you ideally have liked to make a request to...**

read out – code one response for each statement

	Yes – would have liked to make request	No	DK
_1 Work part-time instead of full-time	1	2	3
_2 Reduce your working hours in some other way	1	2	3
_3 Work flexi-hours	1	2	3

_4 Make fewer business trips taking you away from your usual place of work	1	2	3
_5 Work from home or to work from home more frequently	1	2	3
_6 Do some other type of flexible working you would have liked to request but didn't	1	2	3

C7

ask THOSE WHO WOULD HAVE LIKED TO MAKE REQUEST (ANY 1 AT C6\_1 to 6) [Q62 & NEW precodes]

C8 **Which of the following are reasons why you did not make the request(s) to your employer...**

read out. code ALL THAT APPLY FOR EACH statement.

You did not think your request(s) would be approved	1	
You were worried it would be viewed negatively by your employer	2	
You were worried about the reaction of colleagues	3	
You were worried about potential harm to future career prospects	4	
Other (specify)	5	
None of the above	6	
Don't know	7	

ask for each request not APPROVED (code 4 AT C4)

C9 **[IF 2+ REQUESTS NOT APPROVED]Thinking about your requests that were not approved, for any of these did you reach an alternative solution with your employer that...**

**[IF 1 REQUESTS NOT APPROVED]Thinking about your request that was not approved, did you reach an alternative solution with your employer that...**

read out. code ALL THAT APPLY FOR EACH statement.



	Entirely met your needs	Partially met your needs	Did not meet your needs but was 'better than nothing'	No – did not reach an alternative solution	DK -NO DECISION YET/ SITUATION ONGOING	DK
_1 To be allowed to work part-time instead of full-time	1	2	3	4	5	6
_2 To be allowed to reduce your working hours in some other way	1	2	3	4	5	6
_3 To be allowed to work flexi-hours	1	2	3	4	5	6
_4 To be allowed to make fewer business trips taking you away from your usual place of work	1	2	3	4	5	6
_5 To be allowed to work from home or to work from home more frequently	1	2	3	4	5	6
_6 To be allowed to do some other form of flexible working	1	2	3	4	5	6

D

## E Experiences when pregnant / on maternity leave / on return to work

ask all [Q32]

E1 I'd now like to ask you whether any of a number of things happened to you at work from the point at which you told your employer you were pregnant, up until now.

For some of the things I would like to check whether they happened to you, while you were pregnant, while you were on maternity leave or when you returned to work after the birth of your baby

READ OUT. CODE ONE PER ROW.

DP – AFTER EACH STATEMENT. IF ‘YES’ (CODE 1) ANSWERED ASK D2 TO CHECK WHEN THIS OCCURRED. THEN MOVE ONTO NEXT D1 STATEMENT.

	YES	NO	DK	NA
_1 You were encouraged to take time off or signed off on sick leave before you were ready to start maternity leave	1	2	3	4
_2 You were encouraged by your employer to start maternity leave earlier than you would have liked	1	2	3	4
_3 You were discouraged from attending ante-natal classes during work time	1	2	3	4
_4 You were given unsuitable work or workloads	1	2	3	4
_5 Your hours or shift pattern were changed against your wishes	1	2	3	4
_6 You were encouraged / pressured to take voluntary redundancy	1	2	3	4
_7 You were unfairly criticised or disciplined about your performance at work	1	2	3	4
_8 Your role was made redundant	1	2	3	4
_9 You were dismissed / sacked	1	2	3	4
_10 (IF NOT DISMISSED_9=2-4) You were threatened with dismissal	1	2	3	4
_11 (IF NOT MADE REDUNDANT_8=2-4) Redundancy was discussed	1	2	3	4
_12 You failed to gain a promotion you felt you deserved or were otherwise sidelined	1	2	3	4
_13 You were demoted	1	2	3	4
_14 You were denied access to training that you would otherwise have received	1	2	3	4

_15 You had a reduction in your salary or bonus	1	2	3	4
_16 You received a pay rise or bonus that was less than your peers at work	1	2	3	4
_17 You were not given benefits such as a company car or mobile phone that you would otherwise have been entitled to or had them removed	1	2	3	4
_18 You were treated so poorly by your employer that you felt you had to leave	1	2	3	4
_19 You were offered a job at a workplace that was too far away to travel so had to leave	1	2	3	4
_20 You were refused time off to cope with illness or other problems with your baby	1	2	3	4

ASK AFTER each problem answered yes (code 1) from \_4 to \_20 [Q33]

E2 **Did this happen to you while you were in work while pregnant, when you were on maternity leave or when you returned to work following the birth of your baby?**

INTERVIEWER INSTRUCTION: If respondent was on unpaid maternity leave or parental leave or taking annual leave at the end of their maternity leave before returning to work or while negotiating a return to work please classify this as 'on maternity leave'

Read out. code all that apply

While you were still working during pregnancy	1	
[A10C/1] While on maternity leave	2	
[A10A/1-2] When you returned to work after the birth of your baby	3	

E3 **DELETED**

E4 **DELETED**

READ TO ALL WHO WERE MADE REDUNDANT (D1\_8/1): We would now like to ask you a few questions about your redundancy. So thinking about when you were made redundant...

ask if made redundant (d1\_8/1)

E5 D5x Were you made redundant through voluntary redundancy?

Yes	1	
No	2	
Don't know	3	

ask if made redundant (d1\_8/1)

E6 Did your employer offer you an alternative position at the organisation that was..

READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY.

At a higher level to your position	1	
At the same level as your position	2	
At a lower level than your position	3	
No – no other position offered	4	
Don't know level of position offered	5	

ASK THOSE OFFERED A NEW POSITION (D5/1-3, 5)

D5A Did you accept the offer of a new position?

Yes	1	
No	2	
Don't know	3	

ask if made redundant (d1\_8/1)

E7 During the same period were other employees made redundant who were ....

READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY.

At the same level as you	1	
At a different level to you	2	
In the same department or area of the company as you	3	
No – no other employees made redundant	4	
Don't know	5	

E8 **MOVED TO D5x**

E9 **DELETED**

D8a **DELETED**

ASK IF DISMISSED (D1\_9/1)

D8b During the same period were other employees dismissed who were ....

READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY.

At the same level as you	1	
At a different level to you	2	
In the same department or area of the company as you	3	
No – no other employees dismissed	4	
Don't know	5	

E10

ASK IF SHIFT PATTERN or hours CHANGED AGAINST WISHES (D1\_5/1)

E11 **You mentioned that your shift pattern or hours were changed against your wishes. Was it that...**

read out. code all that apply

[IF AGENCY / ZERO-HOURS – B5/3,5] You were not offered any more work	1	
The number of hours you were working was reduced?	2	
You were moved to a shift pattern that was not convenient in terms of other commitments you had (for instance looking after other children)?	3	
You were moved to a shift pattern that was not convenient in terms of travel to and from work	4	
Your shift hours were changed against your wishes in another way?	5	
Don't know / can't remember	6	

ask all

E12 Have you experienced any of the following treatment as a result of your pregnancy?

read out. code all that apply

	YES	NO	DK
You received or heard offensive comments from your employer	1	2	3
You received or heard offensive comments from your colleagues	1	2	3
You were treated in a way that made you feel humiliated or belittled	1	2	3
You experienced any other activity that intimidated or offended you	1	2	3

ask if EXPERIENCED ANY OFFENSIVE COMMENTS (d10\_1 /1 TO d10\_4/1)

E13 Did you complain about this treatment?

Yes	1	
-----	---	--

No	2	
Don't know	3	

ask if complained (d11/1)

E14 Did you feel that you were treated poorly as a result of making that complaint?

Yes	1	
No	2	
Don't know	3	

## F Plans and situation if not currently working

ask if currently on maternity leave (A10b/4-5) [NEW Q – combines old Q40 & 42]

F1 Do you intend to return to work at the end of your maternity leave...

F2 READ OUT. CODE ONE ONLY.

For the same employer you worked for while pregnant	1	
For a different employer	2	
Or do you not intend to return to work after your maternity leave?	3	
Don't know	4	

ask if DO NOT INTEND TO RETURN TO WORK AFTER maternity leave OR IF NOT ON MATERNITY LEAVE AND NOT IN WORK (a10b/6 or e1/3-4)

F3 And did you initially intend to return to work after the birth of your baby but changed your mind? *PROMPT IF NECESSARY. CODE ONE ONLY.*

Yes – initially intended to return to work but changed mind	1	
---	---	--

No – always intended not to return to work	2	
Don't know	3	

Ask if do not intend to return to work (E1/3-4) [old q41 + additional filtering]

F4 To what extent did the way your employer treated you during pregnancy and maternity leave influence your decision not to return to work? Did it...

read out. code ONE ONLY

<u>Heavily influence</u> your decision not to return to work	1	
<u>Slightly influence</u> your decision not to return to work	2	
Or would you say your decision not to return to work was <u>nothing to do with</u> your treatment by employer while pregnant or on maternity leave	3	
Don't know	4	

ask if NOT CURRENTLY IN WORK (a10b/6) [Q43]

F5 Which, if any, of the following reasons explain why you are not currently working?

read out. code all that apply

You cannot find a job with the right hours	1	
You cannot find a job in a suitable location	2	
You would lose benefits if you were working	3	
You cannot find suitable childcare	4	
You cannot find a job that pays enough to pay for childcare	5	
You prefer to look after your children yourself	6	
Some other reason (specify)	7	
Don't know	8	



F6 DELETED

F7 DELETED

ask those who had or are on maternity leave (A10C/1)[Q37]

F8 IF RETURNED TO WORK OR NO LONGER IN WORK (A10A/1-3 or 5): While you were on maternity leave, did you face any of the following problems with your employer?

IF ON MAT LEAVE (A10A/4): While you have been on maternity leave, have you faced any of the following problems with your employer?

read out. code all that apply

	YES	NO	DK
Too much contact from employer during maternity leave	1	2	3
Too little contact from employer during maternity leave	1	2	3
Disagreement about whether or not you were entitled to return to work	1	2	3
Disagreement about when you had to notify them about whether or not you intended to return to work	1	2	3
Disagreement about what job you should do on your return	1	2	3
Disagreement about number of hours you would work on your return	1	2	3
Disagreement about holiday accumulation / benefits entitled to	1	2	3
Pressure to return to work sooner than you wanted	1	2	3
Pressure to work while on maternity leave	1	2	3
You were not adequately informed about redundancies at your organisation that might impact on you	1	2	3
You were not adequately informed about career development opportunities (e.g. promotions)	1	2	3

F9 DELETED

ask THOSE who think too much MAT LEAVE CONTACT (E7\_1/1)

**F10 What was the unnecessary/unwanted contact about?**

DO NOT READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY.

Wanting me to return to work	1	
Wanting me to work while on maternity leave	2	
Other work issues	3	
Wanting me NOT to return to work	4	
Other (specify)	5	
Don't know	6	

ask THOSE who think too little MAT LEAVE CONTACT (E7\_2/1)

**F11 What sort of further contact or information would you have liked from your employer?**

DO NOT READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY.

More general updates about what was happening at work	1	
A <u>quicker</u> response to my queries	2	
Any response to my queries (they never got back to me)	3	
To be offered some KIT days	4	
To be offered MORE KIT days	5	
Other (specify)	6	
Don't know	7	

## G Return to work after birth of baby

G1 ~~DELETED~~

ask if RETURNED TO WORK AFTER BIRTH OF BABY (a10a/1-3)

F1A How long was your [IF HAD MATERNITY LEAVE (A10C/1): maternity leave] [IF DID NOT HAVE MATERNITY LEAVE (A10C/2): break from work]?

1-2 months	1	
3-4 months	2	
5-6 months	3	
7-8 months	4	
9-10 months	5	
11-12 months	6	
13-14 months	7	
15+ months	8	
Don't know	9	
Refused	10	

ASK IF CURRENTLY WORKING OR IF DID WORK AFTER BIRTH BUT NOW NO LONGER DOING SO (A10b/1-3 OR [A10B/6 AND A10a/1-3])

The next few questions that I'd like to ask you relate to the job that you held immediately after you returned [IF HAD MATERNITY LEAVE (A10C/1): from maternity leave] [IF DID NOT HAVE MATERNITY LEAVE (A10C/2): to work after the birth of your baby]...

ask those who returned to work after maternity leave with same employer [A10A/1] [Q49]

G2 **Can I just check, was your job title and job description when you returned [IF HAD MATERNITY LEAVE (A10C/1): from maternity leave] [IF DID NOT HAVE MATERNITY LEAVE (A10C/2): to work after the birth of your baby,] the same as before you left?**

Yes	1	
No	2	
Don't know	3	

G3

ASK IF job title / description DIFFERENT (f2/2)

G4 **And was your job at...**

READ OUT. CODE ONE ONLY.

The same level as before the birth of your child	1	
At a lower level	2	
Or at a higher level	3	
Don't know	4	

ASK IF DOING DIFFERENT WORK OR JOB (f2/2) [Q51]

F3a **And is this the job that you wanted to do?**

Yes	1	
No	2	
Don't know	3	

ask those who returned to work after maternity leave with same employer [A10A/1]

G5 **And were there any changes to your role that happened against your wishes? What were these?**

DO NOT READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY.

Yes - Duties were/are at a lower level	1	
Yes - Opinion less valued	2	
Yes - Fewer opportunities for progression	3	
Yes - Other (specify)	4	
No - no changes against wishes	5	

Don't know	6	
------------	---	--

G6 DELETED

G7 DELETED

ask if worked for a different employer on employed basis (A10A/2)

G8 **What is the main activity of the business you worked for immediately after [IF HAD MATERNITY LEAVE (A10C/1): maternity leave] [IF DID NOT HAVE MATERNITY LEAVE (A10C/2): the birth of your baby]? [Q53]**

INTERVIEWER PROBE

- **What is the main product or service of this establishment?**

WRITE IN. TO BE CODED TO 2 DIGIT SIC 2007. ALLOW REFUSED.

ASK IF WORKED FOR A DIFFERENT EMPLOYER ON EMPLOYED BASIS (A10A/2) [Q54]

G9 **How many people worked for your employer at the site where you returned to work, excluding temporary or casual staff?**

PROMPT IF NECESSARY. CODE ONE ONLY.

Between 1 and 5 people	1	
Between 6 and 9 people	2	
Between 10 and 24 people	3	
Between 25 and 49 people	4	
Between 50 and 99 people	5	
Between 100 and 249 people	6	

250+people	7	
Don't know	8	

ASK IF WORKED FOR A DIFFERENT EMPLOYER ON EMPLOYED BASIS  
(A10A/2)

**G10 Which of the following best describes the type of contract that you had immediately after you returned IF HAD MATERNITY LEAVE (A10C/1): from maternity leave] [IF DID NOT HAVE MATERNITY LEAVE (A10C/2): to work]? [Q55a & NEW CODE- SEE NOTE]**

IF ASKED ABOUT ZERO-HOURS: A zero-hour contract is a contract where the employer does not guarantee to provide the worker with work and will only pay the worker for those hours which are actually worked.

READ OUT. CODE ONE ONLY.

Permanent	1	
Fixed Term Contract	2	
Agency work	3	
Casual Work	4	
Zero-hours contract	5	
Other (specify)	6	
Don't know	7	

ASK IF CURRENTLY WORKING OR IF DID WORK AFTER BIRTH BUT NOW NO LONGER DOING SO (A10b/1-3 OR [A10B/6 AND A10a/1-3]) [Q47]

**G11 When you returned to work were you working the same, fewer or more hours than when you were pregnant.**

Earlier you told us you were working [INSERT ANSWER FROM B6] hours at the point you told your employer you were pregnant.

READ OUT. CODE ONE ONLY.

The same	1	
Fewer	2	
More	3	

ASK IF WORKING FEWER OR MORE HOURS [F10/2 OR 3]

F10a How many hours a week did you work on average when you returned to work, including paid and unpaid overtime and excluding meal breaks?

INTERVIEWER NOTE: IF VARIED ASK FOR ANSWER IN RELATION TO TYPICAL WEEK

ENTER NUMBER: ALLOW 1-99

If Don't know exact number – prompt with ranges

Less than 10 hours a week	1
11-15 hours	2
16-20 hours	3
21-25 hours	4
26-30 hours	5
31-35 hours	6
36-40 hours	7
41-50 hours	8
51-60 hours	9
61-70 hours	10
More than 70 hours a week	11
Don't know	12
Refused	13

ASK IF CURRENTLY WORKING OR IF DID WORK AFTER BIRTH BUT NOW NO LONGER DOING SO (A10b/1-3 OR [A10B/6 AND A10a/1-3]) [Q46] / [Q46a]

G12 **And thinking about how much you earning when you returned [IF HAD MATERNITY LEAVE (A10C/1): from maternity leave] [IF DID NOT HAVE MATERNITY LEAVE (A10C/2): to work after the birth of your baby], was this the same, less or more than you were earning when you were pregnant?**

G13 **Earlier you told us you were earning [INSERT ANSWER FROM B7] when you were pregnant.**

READ OUT. CODE ONE ONLY.

The same	1	
Less	2	
More	3	

G14

G15 **DELETED**

ASK IF earning less or more [F11/2OR 3]

F10a2 **And choosing from the following bands, before tax, how much did you earn on your return to work?**

Up to £2,999 a year / up to £249 a month / up to £57 a week	1
£3,000 - £4,999 a year / £250 - £416 a month / £58 - £96 a week	2
£5,000 - £9,999 a year / £417-£833 a month / £97 - £192 a week	3
£10,000 - £19,999 a year / £834-£1,666 a month / £193 - £384 a week	4
£20,000 - £29,999 a year / £1,666 - £2,499 a month / £385 - £577 a week	5
£30,000 - £39,999 a year / £2,500-£3,333 a month / £578 - £769 a week	6
£40,000 - £49,999 a year / £3,333 - £4,166 a month / £770 - £958 a week	7



£50,000 - £59,999 a year / £4,167 - £4,999 a month / £959 - £1,150 a week	8
£60,000 - £69,999 a year / £5,000 - £5,832 a month / £1,151 - £1,342 a week	9
£70,000 - £79,999 a year / £5,833 - £6,665 a month / £1,343 - £1,533 a week	10
£80,000 - £89,999 a year / £6,666 - £7,499 a month / £1,534 - £1,725 a week	11
£90,000 - £99,999 a year / £7,500- £8,332 a month / £1,726 - £1,917 a week	12
£100,000 a year or more / £8,333 a month or more / £1,918 a week or more	13
Don't Know	9
Refused	10

G16

G17 **DELETED**

G18 **DELETED**

ask if returned to work as an employee (A10A/1-2) [Q55]

G19 **And overall would you say your employer was supportive of your needs as someone who had a young baby to look after. Would you say...?**

READ OUT. CODE ONE ONLY.

They supported your needs willingly	1	
They supported your needs but somewhat reluctantly	2	
They supported your needs but very reluctantly	3	
They did not support your needs	4	
DO NOT READ OUT: Don't know	5	

G20 **DELETED**

G21 ASK If did return to work but no longer working or working for different employer to the employer they returned to following the birth of their baby ((A10A/1-2 and A10B/6) or (A10A/1 and a10b/2)

G22 Thinking about the employer that you worked for immediately after [IF HAD MATERNITY LEAVE (A10C/1): maternity leave] [IF DID NOT HAVE MATERNITY LEAVE (A10C/2): the birth of your baby], how long did you spend working for this employer?

1-2 months	1	
3-4 months	2	
5-6 months	3	
7-8 months	4	
9-10 months	5	
11-12 months	6	
1 year +	7	
Don't know	8	

ask if working for same employer before and after maternity leave (a10a/1) [Q59]

G23 After returning to work after [IF HAD MATERNITY LEAVE (A10C/1): maternity leave] [IF DID NOT HAVE MATERNITY LEAVE (A10C/2): the birth of your baby], would you say that – as a result of your pregnancy and the birth of your child - you were treated better, worse or no differently by your employer in comparison with the time before you informed your employer of your pregnancy?

prompt if necessary. code one only.

Better	1	
Worse	2	
No different	3	
Don't know	4	

THE NEW F19 BELOW HAS BEEN MOVED FROM G2

ASK IF DID RETURN TO WORK BUT NO LONGER WORKING OR WORKING FOR DIFFERENT EMPLOYER TO THE EMPLOYER THEY RETURNED TO FOLLOWING THE BIRTH OF THEIR BABY (AND NOT MADE REDUNDANT OR SACKED AFTER THE BIRTH) [Q65]

[(A10A/1-2 AND A10B/6) OR (A10A/1 AND A10B/2)] AND [(D2\_8 IS NOT 3) OR (D2\_9 IS NOT 3)]

G24 For what reason(s) did you stop working for the employer that you worked for immediately after [IF HAD MATERNITY LEAVE (A10C/1): you returned from maternity leave] [IF DID NOT HAVE MATERNITY LEAVE (A10C/2): the birth of your baby]?

do not read out. code all that apply

The job did not have the right hours	1	
The job was not in a suitable location	2	
You found a better job	3	
You could not afford childcare	4	
You could not find suitable childcare	5	
You prefer not to work	6	
You were treated so poorly that you felt you had to leave	7	
You became pregnant again	8	
Other (specify)	9	
Don't know	10	

## H DELETED

## I Breastfeeding / expressing milk in the workplace

I1 ASK ALL WHO HAVE WORKED SINCE BIRTH OF BABY (A10A/1-3)

I2 I'd like to now ask you about feeding your baby and going back to work...

ask if WORKed since birth of baby (A10A/1-3)

13 Have you breastfed [INSERT NAME OR AGE OF BABY AS PER A8DUM2] or given them expressed breast milk for any length of time since they were born?

Yes	1	
No	2	
Don't know	3	

ask if HAVE BREASTFED and worked since birth of baby (H1/1)

14 And which of the following best describes your circumstances ...

read out. code one only

You stopped breastfeeding / expressing milk some time before you returned to work	1	
You stopped breastfeeding / expressing milk just before or around the point at which you returned to work	2	
You continued breastfeeding / expressing milk after your return to work but you have stopped now	3	
You are still breastfeeding / expressing milk	4	

ask all who have ever breastfed and worked since birth of baby (H1/1)

15 As far as you know, does your current employer provide facilities for expressing milk or breastfeeding in the workplace? By this I mean having a designated area to express milk or breastfeed in (other than the toilets or a sickroom) and a fridge so that expressed milk can be stored.

Yes	1	
No	2	
Don't know	3	

ask all who have breastfed and who worked since birth of baby but who are not doing so now / all who are working for a different employer since returned from maternity leave (H1/1 AND [A10A/2-3, 5] OR [A10B/2-3, 6])

16 **As far as you know, did the employer you worked for when returning to work after the birth of your baby provide facilities for expressing milk or breastfeeding in the workplace? By this I mean having a designated area to express milk or breastfeed in (other than the toilets or sick room) and/or a fridge so that expressed milk can be stored.**

Yes	1	
No	2	
Don't know	3	

ask IF stopped breastfeeding (H2/1-3)

17 **Did your return to work have any influence on your decision to stop breastfeeding?**

Yes	1	
No	2	
Don't know	3	

ask IF ANY INFLUENCE (H5/1)

18 **How big an influence? Would you say...**

read out. code one only

It had a big influence OR	1	
It had some influence	2	
Don't know	3	

ask IF work had a big / some impact on stopping breastfeeding (H6/1-2)

19 **And why do you say that?**

DO NOT read out. code ALL THAT APPLY.

Was <u>NOT ALLOWED</u> to express / breastfeed at work	1	
I would not have been allowed to express / breastfeed at work	2	
<u>IT WAS</u> impractical for job to express / breastfeed at work	3	
It would not have been practical for job to express / breastfeed at work	4	
There were no facilities to express / breastfeed at work	5	
Difficulties with colleagues / colleagues would not have been supportive	6	
Wasn't sure how to continue breastfeeding while working / assumed I had to stop	7	
Other (specify)	8	
Don't know	9	

ask IF work had a big / some impact on stopping breastfeeding (H6/1-2)

110 **And would you have wanted to continue breastfeeding for longer after you had returned to work?**

Yes	1	
No	2	
Don't know	3	

ask ALL WHO BREASTFED and worked since birth of baby (H2/2-4)

111 **Did you talk to your employer or line manager at any point about the possibility of expressing milk or breastfeeding at work?**

112 **ADD IF NECESSARY: Even though you may have stopped breastfeeding before returning to work we are interested if you had any discussions about this prior to returning to work.**

Yes	1	
No	2	
Don't know	3	

ask IF TALKED TO EMPLOYER ABOUT BREASTFEEDING / EXPRESSING (H9/1)

113 **When did you first have these discussions? Was it....**

read out. code ONE ONLY.

During your pregnancy	1	
While you were on maternity leave	2	
When you first returned to work	3	
Or after being back at work for some time	4	
Other (specify)	5	
Don't know / can't remember	6	

ask IF TALKED TO EMPLOYER ABOUT BREASTFEEDING / EXPRESSING (H9/1)

114 **What was their response to your enquiry?**

DO NOT read out. code ALL THAT APPLY.

They said they could provide the facilities and/or breaks that you needed to express milk/breastfeed	1	
They said you could express milk/breastfeed but they would not provide special facilities to do so	2	
They said you could not express milk/breastfeed	3	

at work on health and safety grounds as special facilities could not be provided for this		
They said you could not express milk/breastfeed as this would entail having extra breaks from work	4	
Expressing milk/breastfeeding at work was incompatible with your job role	5	
Other (specify)	6	
Don't know / can't remember	7	

ask ALL WHO BREASTFED and worked since birth of baby (H2 = 3 OR 4)

**I15 And overall would you say your employer was supportive of your needs as a breastfeeding mother. Would you say...?**

READ OUT. CODE ONE ONLY.

They supported your needs willingly	1	
They supported your needs but somewhat reluctantly	2	
They supported your needs but very reluctantly	3	
They did not support your needs	4	
DO NOT READ OUT: Don't know	5	

ask IF DID NOT TALK TO EMPLOYER ABOUT BREASTFEEDING / EXPRESSING (H9/2-3 AND H2 = 3 OR 4)

**I16 Why did you not ask your employer about expressing milk or breastfeeding at work?**

DO NOT READ OUT. PROBE FULLY

Assumed they would turn down the request because of the extra breaks needed	1	
---	---	--



Assumed they would turn down the request because of the facilities needed	2	
Assumed they would turn down the request for other reasons (specify)	3	
Felt too embarrassed to raise it	4	
Was happy to continue breastfeeding without needing to express or breastfeed at work	5	
Other (specify)	6	
Don't know	7	
Refused	8	

ask if continued breastfeeding after returning to work (H2/3-4)

**117 And did you express milk or breastfeed at work?**

Yes – expressed milk at work	1	
Yes – breastfed at work	2	
Yes - both	3	
No - neither	4	
Don't know	5	

ask if DID NOT EXPRESS / breastfeed AT work (h14/4)

**118 And would you say this was...**

**READ OUT. CODE ONE ONLY.**

Your own choice that was right for you	1	
Or would you have ideally wanted to express / breastfeed at work but didn't feel you could	2	

Don't know	3	
------------	---	--

ask if continued breastfeeding after returning to work (H14/1-3)

119 **IF STILL BREASTFEEDING-H2/4: And which of the following best describes how often you [H14/1: express milk at work; H14/2: breastfed at work; H14/3: express milk or breastfed at work]?**

120 **IF NOT STILL BREASTFEEDING-H2/1-3: And which of the following best describes how often you [H14/1: expressed milk at work; H14/2: breastfed at work; H14/3: expressed milk or breastfed at work]?**

Only once or twice	1	
More than once or twice but not every day	2	
Once a day	5	
Two or more times a day	6	
Don't know	7	

ask if expressed milk or breastfed at work (H14/1-3)

121 **Did you experience any problems or difficulties doing so?**

Yes	1	
No	2	
Don't know	5	

ask if experienced any problems expressing/breastfeeding at work (H17/1)

122 **What problems or difficulties did you experience?**

DO NOT READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY.

Employer was reluctant to / didn't provide necessary breaks	1	
---	---	--

Employer was reluctant to / didn't provide necessary facilities	2	
Nature of job role made it difficult	3	
Negative reactions or comments from managers	4	
Negative reactions or comments from other colleagues	5	
Other (specify)	6	
Don't know	7	

ask if returned to work but left job and continued breastfeeding after a return to work (H2/3-4 and {[a10a/2-3] or [a10a/1 and a10b/2-3, 5-6]})

I23 **How far would you say any issues experienced with expressing milk or breastfeeding at work influenced your decision to leave work? Would you say....**

read out. code one only

It had a big influence	1	
It had some influence	2	
It had no influence	3	
Don't know	4	

J

## K Experiences of recruitment while pregnant / after birth of baby

K1 **DELETED**

ask those who were not agency workers while pregnant OR NOT AGENCY WORKERS ON RETURN TO WORK ([B5/ not 3] OR [F9/NOT 3]) [NEW Q]

I1a I'd like to ask you about any job interviews you may have attended while pregnant or after the birth of your baby.

K2 **When you were pregnant did you attend any job interviews either internally for a promotion or different role or to work for a new organisation?**

read out. code one only

Yes	1	
No	2	
Don't know	3	

ask those who were not agency workers while pregnant OR NOT AGENCY WORKERS ON RETURN TO WORK ([B5/ not 3] OR [F9/NoT 3]) [NEW Q]

I1b And did you attend any job interviews either internally for a promotion or different role or to work for a new organisation after the birth of your baby?

read out. code one only

Yes	1	
No	2	
Don't know	3	

ask those who agency workers while pregnant or after birth of baby (B5/3 Or F9/3) [NEW Q]

K3 Did your agency put you forward for interviews either while pregnant or after the birth of your baby?

PROMPT IF NECESSARY. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Yes – while pregnant	1	
[IF A10A/1-2] Yes – after the birth of baby		
No	3	
Don't know	4	

ask those who ATTENDED INTERVIEWS while pregnant (I1A/1 or I2/1) [NEW Q]

K4 **We're interested in whether the organisations conducting the interviews while you were pregnant were aware of your pregnancy. Did any of the following happen at any interviews...**

K5 **ADD IF NECESSARY: IF MULTIPLE INTERVIEWS ATTENDED THEN PLEASE SAY YES IF THIS HAPPENED AT ANY OF YOUR INTERVIEWS**

READ OUT. CODE ONE ONLY PER ROW.

	YES	NO	DK
_1 You mentioned the pregnancy during the interview	1	2	3
_2 You mentioned your pregnancy following the interview	1	2	3
_3 It was visually apparent that you were pregnant	1	2	3
_4 The organisation conducting the interview was aware of your pregnancy anyway	1	2	3
_5 The organisation conducting the interview asked if you were pregnant	1	2	3

ask those who ATTENDED INTERVIEWS while pregnant (I1A/1 or I2/1) [NEW Q]

I3A Were you successful at any interviews you attended while pregnant?

READ OUT. CODE ONLY

Yes	1	
No	2	
Don't know	3	

ask if yes to any statements (code 1 at any I3 statement AND I3A/2) [NEW Q]

K6 **Do you think being pregnant during interviews affected whether or not you were successful? Would you say...**

READ OUT. CODE ONLY

Yes – definitely	1	
Yes – possibly / in some cases	2	
You don't think so / not in most cases	3	
No – definitely not	4	

K7

ask if THINK PREGNANCY AFFECTED APPLICATION (I4/1-2) [NEW Q]

K8 **Why do you say that?**

DO NOT READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

It was made clear in an interview that the job would not be offered due to pregnancy	1	
A question was asked during / after an interview around pregnancy or maternity leave	2	
A job offer was withdrawn when pregnancy mentioned	3	
Other (specify)	4	
Don't know	5	

ask those who ATTENDED INTERVIEWS AFTER BIRTH OF BABY (I1B/1 or I2/2) [NEW Q]

K9 **We're interested in whether the organisations conducting interviews after the birth of your baby were aware that you had a baby or young child.. Did any of the following happen at any interviews...**

K10 **ADD IF NECESSARY: IF MULTIPLE INTERVIEWS ATTENDED THEN PLEASE SAY YES IF THIS HAPPENED AT ANY OF YOUR INTERVIEWS**

READ OUT. CODE ONE ONLY PER ROW.

	YES	NO	DK
_1 You mentioned your child during the interview	1	2	3
_2 You mentioned your child when offered a job following the	1	2	3

interview			
_3 The organisation conducting the interview was aware you had a baby / young child anyway	1	2	3
_4 The organisation conducting the interview asked if you had a baby / young child	1	2	3

ask those who ATTENDED INTERVIEWS AFTER BIRTH OF BABY (I1B/1 or I2/2)  
[NEW Q]

I6A Were you successful at any interviews you attended after the birth of your baby?

READ OUT. CODE ONLY

Yes	1	
No	2	
Don't know	3	

ask if yes to any statements (code 1 at any I6 statement and I6A/2) [NEW Q]

K11 Do you think having a young child or baby at the time of interviews affected whether or not you were successful? Would you say...

READ OUT. CODE ONLY

Yes – definitely	1	
Yes – possibly	2	
You don't think so	3	
No – definitely not	4	

ask if THINK having a young child or baby AFFECTED APPLICATION (I7/1-2) [NEW Q]

K12 **Why do you say that?**

DO NOT READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

It was made clear in an interview that the job would not be offered due to having a young child / baby	1	
A question was asked during / after an interview around whether had a young child / baby	2	
A job offer was withdrawn when young child / baby mentioned	3	
Other (specify)	4	
Don't know	5	

L

**M Raising employment rights problems with others / usage of Employment Tribunals**

ask if currently working (a10B/1-3) [Q66]

**M1 To what extent would you agree with the following statement –‘The way in which I have been treated at work during pregnancy, while on maternity leave and after returning to work have made me consider leaving my employer.’**

read out. code one only

Agree strongly	1	
Agree slightly	2	
Neither agree nor disagree	3	
Disagree slightly	4	
Disagree strongly	5	
Don't know	6	

ask all [Q75]



M2 Looking back, how fairly do you feel that you were treated overall by your line manager on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means very fairly and 5 means not at all fairly...

M3 **ADD IF NECESSARY:** It does not matter if you are referring to a different line manager at each stage

	Very fairly		Not at all fairly			DK
_1 When pregnant (after informing your employer you were pregnant)	1	2	3	4	5	6
_2 (IF HAD M/L: A10C/1): When on maternity leave	1	2	3	4	5	6
_3 (IF WORKED AFTER M/L A10/2-3 ) On your return to work	1	2	3	4	5	6

ask all [Q75]

M4 Looking back, how fairly do you feel that you were treated overall by your employer, on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means very fairly and 5 means not at all fairly...

M5 **ADD IF NECESSARY:** It does not matter if you are referring to a different employer at each stage

	Very fairly		Not at all fairly			DK
_1 When pregnant (after informing your employer you were pregnant)	1	2	3	4	5	6
_2 (IF HAD M/L: A10C/1): When on maternity leave	1	2	3	4	5	6
_3 (IF WORKED AFTER M/L A10/2-3) On your return to work	1	2	3	4	5	6

ask ALI

J4x Have you raised any issues either formally or informally with anyone regarding any problems that you may have experienced with your employer either while you were pregnant, on maternity leave or after you returned to work?

Yes	1	
No	2	
Don't know	3	

ask all who have raised problems (J4X/1) [Q67 & NEW precode]

M6 **As a result of any problems that you may have experienced with your employer, did you do any of the following things....?**

read out. code all that apply

Raise it with friends / relatives	1	
Raise it with a workplace trade union representative	2	
Raise it with other work colleagues	3	
Seek advice or information from any external organisations	4	
Raise it with your manager	5	
Raise it with your employer	6	
Go through an internal grievance procedure	7	
Contact ACAS (Including under the Early Conciliation procedure) (IF NECESSARY: ACAS - the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service)	8	
Lodge a complaint with the employment tribunal	9	
Anything else (specify)	10	
Did not do anything	11	
No problems experienced	12	
Don't know	13	

ask THOSE WHO SOUGHT ADVICE FROM ORGANISATIONS (J4/4)

M7 Which organisation(s) did you go to? Where did you look for information?

DO NOT read out. code all that apply

ACAS – the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service	1	
Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)	2	
Colleagues	3	
The Equality Advisory Support Service (EASS)	4	
The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC)	5	
GOV.UK	6	
Lawyer / Solicitor	7	
Maternity Action	8	
Working Families	9	
Trade Union	10	
Other (specify)	11	
Don't know / Can't remember	12	

ask THOSE WHO SOUGHT ADVICE FROM ORGANISATIONS (J4/4)

M8 Was any of the advice you sought related to...

READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY.

Gaining financial support to pursue an employment tribunal claim against your employer?	1	
Gaining advice on the strength of your case for making an employment tribunal claim?	2	

No - neither	3	
Don't know	4	

ask THOSE WHO SOUGHT ADVICE REGARDING COSTS (J6/1)

M9 **At any point were you advised that in certain circumstances Employment Tribunal Fees can be reduced or removed entirely?**

Yes	1	
No	2	
Don't know	3	

ask THOSE WHO SOUGHT ADVICE REGARDING COSTS (J6/1)

J7A Were your Employment Tribunal Fees either...

Removed entirely	1	
Or Reduced (but not completely removed)	2	
No - neither	3	
Don't know	4	

ask ALL who had raised problems AND ARE NOT YES TO J4 2, 7 8 AND 9 (J4X/1) AND (J4 is NOT 2 AND 7 AND 8 AND 9) [Q68]

M10 **And as a result of any problems that you may have experienced with your employer, did you consider doing any of these things at any stage (even if you didn't end up actually doing them)?**

read out. code all that apply

DP: exclude all mentioned at J4

[IF J4≠2] Raising it with a workplace trade union	1	
---	---	--

representative		
[IF J4#7] Going through an internal grievance procedure	2	
[IF J4#8] Contacting ACAS under the Early Conciliation procedure (IF NECESSARY: ACAS - the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service)	3	
[IF J4#9] Lodging a complaint with the employment tribunal	4	
Don't know	5	
None of these	6	

ask if considered following internal grievance procedure (J8/2) [Q69]

M11 **Why did you decide not to follow an internal grievance procedure?**

do not read out. code all that apply

I did not feel I had a good enough case	1	
I did not want to get into trouble at work	2	
I did not want to damage my future employment prospects	3	
I was afraid I would lose my job	4	
The prospect was too daunting	5	
I was busy with my baby / wanted to focus on pregnancy or maternity leave	6	
I got another job	7	
I left my job without another job to go to	8	
I was dismissed	9	
I was made redundant	10	

I did not know where to get advice / help	11	
I did not want to go through the Early Conciliation process	12	
I could not afford employment tribunal fees	13	
I could not afford costs other than ET fees	14	
I thought the process was too complex	15	
Some other reason (SPECIFY)	16	
Don't know	17	

ask if considered contacting acas about ec (J8/3) [Q69]

M12 J9aWhy did you decide not to go through Early Conciliation through ACAS?

do not read out. code all that apply

I did not feel I had a good enough case	1	
I did not want to get into trouble at work	2	
I did not want to damage my future employment prospects	3	
I was afraid I would lose my job	4	
The prospect was too daunting	5	
I was busy with my baby / wanted to focus on pregnancy or maternity leave	6	
I got another job	7	
I left my job without another job to go to	8	
I was dismissed	9	
I was made redundant	10	
I did not know where to get advice / help	11	
I did not want to go through the Early	12	

Conciliation process		
I could not afford employment tribunal fees	13	
I could not afford costs other than ET fees	14	
I thought the process was too complex	15	
Some other reason (SPECIFY)	16	
Don't know	17	

ask if considered lodging a claim with employment but did not take action (J8/4)  
[Q69]

J9b Why did you decide not to lodge a complaint with the employment tribunal?

do not read out. code all that apply

I did not feel I had a good enough case	1	
I did not want to get into trouble at work	2	
I did not want to damage my future employment prospects	3	
I was afraid I would lose my job	4	
The prospect was too daunting	5	
I was busy with my baby / wanted to focus on pregnancy or maternity leave	6	
I got another job	7	
I left my job without another job to go to	8	
I was dismissed	9	
I was made redundant	10	
I did not know where to get advice / help	11	
I did not want to go through the Early Conciliation process	12	

I could not afford employment tribunal fees	13	
I could not afford costs other than ET fees	14	
I thought the process was too complex	15	
Some other reason (SPECIFY)	16	
Don't know	17	

ask if lodged complaint with employment tribunal (J4/9) [Q70]

**M13 You said you made a complaint against your employer to an Employment Tribunal. Was that regarding...?**

read out. code all that apply

Unfair dismissal	1	
Redundancy		
Sex discrimination	2	
Right to return to work	3	
Concerning time off for ante-natal care	4	
Refusal of flexible working request	5	
Pregnancy and maternity discrimination	6	
Other reason (specify)	7	
Don't know	8	

M14

**ASK IF LODGED COMPLAINT WITH EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNAL (J4/9) [Q71]**

**M15 What happened with your Employment Tribunal claim? Was it....?**

READ OUT. CODE ONE ONLY

Withdrawn	1	
Settled	2	



Won at Employment Tribunal	3	
Lost at Employment Tribunal	4	
Don't know	5	
Refused	6	

ask if won at tribunal (J11/3) [Q72]

**M16 Was the outcome from the Employment Tribunal that your employer should pay you compensation?**

Yes	1	
No	2	
Don't know	3	

ask if AWARDED COMPENSATION (J12/1) [Q72]

**M17 Did you receive compensation from your employer?**

Yes	1	
No	2	
Don't know	3	

ask if EMPLOYER HAD NOT PAID COMPENSATION (J13/2)

**M18 Did you take enforcement action to get the employer to pay the compensation? For example through asking a High Court Enforcement Officer to act for you to collect the money.**

Yes	1	
No	2	
Don't know	3	

M19

ask if received compensation (J13/1) [Q73]

M20 How much did you receive?

ENTER NUMBER IN £: ALLOW 1-999,999		
Refused	1	

If Don't know exact number – prompt with ranges

Under £250	1
£251-£1,000	2
£1,001- £2,000	3
£2,001-£5,000	4
£5,001-£10,000	5
£10,001+	6
Refused	X

ASK IF LODGED COMPLAINT WITH EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNAL (J4/9) [Q74]

M21 Approximately how much did you have to spend on the process of going to the Employment Tribunal?

ENTER NUMBER IN £: ALLOW 1-999,999		
Refused	1	

If Don't know exact number – prompt with ranges

Under £250	1	
£251-£1,000	2	
£1,001- £2,000	3	
£2,001-£5,000	4	
£5,001-£10,000	5	
£10,001+	6	
REFUSED	X	

ask all

**M22 If you wanted to seek advice on employment rights issues related to pregnancy, maternity leave or your rights as a working parent which organisations or people would you go to for information?**

DO NOT read out. code all that apply

ACAS – the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service	1	
Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)	2	
Colleagues	3	
The Equality Advisory Support Service (EASS)	4	
The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC)	5	
Friends / family	6	
GOV.UK	7	

HR department / your employer	8	
Lawyer / Solicitor	9	
Maternity Action	10	
Working Families	11	
Trade Union	12	
An internet search (e.g. Google)	13	
Support groups	14	
Other (specify)	15	
Don't know	16	

## N Further demographics

ask all [Q76]

**N1 Finally, I'd like to ask you a few questions that will help us to put your answers into context. At the time when your baby was born, were you....?**

read out. code one only

Married / living with partner / In a Civil Partnership	1	
Divorced / separated / with a dissolved Civil Partnership	2	
Widowed	3	
Single	4	
DO NOT READ OUT: Don't know	5	
DO NOT READ OUT: Refused	6	

ask all [Q75a – WITH NEW PRECODES]

N2 Which of these is the highest level of qualification you have?

read out. code one only.

Degree level or above	1	
2 or more A-Levels, NVQ Level 3 or equivalent	2	
1 A-Level or equivalent, 5 or more GCSEs of grade A*-C or equivalent, NVQ Level 2 or equivalent	3	
GCSEs of less than A*-C or equivalent, NVQ Level 1	4	
Something else (Specify)	5	
No qualifications	6	
Don't know	7	
Refused	8	

N3 **DELETED**

ask all [Q78]

N4 Do you have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expecting to last for 12 months or more?

Yes	1	
No	2	
Don't know	3	
Refused	4	

ask all

L6A Does [INSERT NAME OR AGE OF BABY AS PER A8DUM2] have a disability or long term health condition?

Yes	1	
No	2	
Don't know	3	
Refused	4	

ask all [Q79]

N5 **Choosing from the following bands, please could you tell me the value of your total household income (before tax)? You can tell me per year, per month or per week. Would you say that it is...?**

interviewer note: this includes any benefit or other payments

N6 **READ OUT. CODE ONE ONLY.**

Up to £9,999 a year / Up to £833 a month / Up to £97 - £192 a week	1
£10,000 - £19,999 a year / £834-£1,666 a month / £193 - £384 a week	2
£20,000 - £29,999 a year / £1,666 - £2,499 a month / £385 - £577 a week	3
£30,000 - £39,999 a year / £2,500-£3,333 a month / £578 - £769 a week	4
£40,000 - £49,999 a year / £3,333 - £4,166 a month / £770 - £958 a	5

week	
£50,000 - £59,999 a year / £4,167 - £4,999 a month / £959 - £1,150 a week	6
£60,000 - £69,999 a year / £5,000 - £5,832 a month / £1,151 - £1,342 a week	7
£70,000 - £79,999 a year / £5,833 - £6,665 a month / £1,343 - £1,533 a week	8
£80,000 - £89,999 a year / £6,666 - £7,499 a month / £1,534 - £1,725 a week	9
£90,000 - £99,999 a year / £7,500- £8,332 a month / £1,726 - £1,917 a week	10
£100,000 a year or more / £8,333 a month or more / £1,918 a week or more	11
Don't Know	12
Refused	13

N7 DELETED

N8 DELETED

N9 DELETED

N10 DELETED

N11 DELETED

N12 DELETED

ask All currently in work (A10B/1-3)

N13 Were you a member of a Trade Union at any of the following stages?

READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY

When you were pregnant	1	
ONLY TO THOSE ON / HAD MATERNITY LEAVE [A10C/1]: When you were on maternity leave	2	
ONLY THOSE RETURNED TO WORK [A10A/1-3]: When you returned to work	3	
DO NOT READ OUT: None of the above	4	DO NOT MULTICODE
Don't know	5	DO NOT MULTICODE
Refused	6	

ask All currently in work (A10B/1-3)

N14 Did your employer recognise a trade union...?

READ OUT. CODE ALL THAT APPLY



When you were pregnant	1	
ONLY TO THOSE ON / HAD MATERNITY LEAVE [A10C/1]: When you were on maternity leave	2	
ONLY THOSE RETURNED TO WORK [A10A/1-3]: When you returned to work	3	
DO NOT READ OUT: None of the above	4	DO NOT MULTICODE
Don't know	5	DO NOT MULTICODE
Refused	6	

N15 **DELETED**

N16 **DELETED**

ask all

N17 **What, if any, religion are you?**

DO NOT READ OUT. CODE ONE ONLY.

Christian (all denominations)	1	
Buddhist	2	

Hindu	3	
Jewish	4	
Muslim	5	
Sikh	6	
Any other religion (specify)	7	
No religion	8	
Don't know	9	
Refused	10	

ask all

N18 **Would you describe your sexual orientation as...**

READ OUT CODE ONE ONLY.

Heterosexual / straight	1	
Gay woman / lesbian	2	

Bisexual	3	
Other (specify)	4	
Don't know	5	
Refused	6	

## O Thank and close

- O1 **Thank you very much for taking the time to speak to us today. As part of the research we will be conducting a follow-up stage early next year (around March and April 2015) where we'd like to speak to mothers further about their experiences of working while pregnant or after the birth of their baby.**

This stage will be important as it will help us to give examples of the specific experiences of real mothers. Whether you have had a positive experience or a negative experience or a mixture of both we would greatly value your participation.

This stage of the research would involve a face-to-face discussion at a time and place convenient to you early next year (around March and April 2015). As a thank you for sparing the time to take part we would offer £30.

In principle would you be willing to take part in this next stage of the research? Agreeing now does not commit you to taking part, we would get in touch nearer the time of the research to check whether you would still like to participate.

Yes	1	
No	2	

### IF AGREE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE QUAL (L1/1)

- O2 **And can I just check, will [NUMBER] be the best number to call you on nearer the time of the research?**

Yes	1	
No - write in number	2	

IF CONSENT TO recontact (L1/1)

O3 **And could I take another number [IF CALLING ON A LL NUMBER: such as a mobile number; IF CALLING ON A MOB NUMBER: such as a landline number] just to make sure I'm able to reach you?**

Yes - write in number	1	
No other number	2	

IF CONSENT TO recontact (L1/1)

O4 **If it would be convenient to contact you via email can I take down your email address?**

Yes – write in email address	1	
No	2	

ASK ALL

O5 **And can I just check would you be willing for us to call you back regarding:**

This particular study – if we need to clarify any of the information	1	
Other research studies which may be relevant to you	2	
Neither of these	3	

IF YES TO recontact AND TEL NUMBERS NOT ALREADY COLLECT ([L5\_1/1 or L5\_2/1] AND L1/2)

O6 **And could I just check, is [NUMBER] the best number to call you on?**

Yes	1	
No - write in number	2	

ASK ALL

**O7 DO NOT READ OUT: INTERVIEWER – Has respondent requested details of organisations to contact regarding employment rights? ONLY SELECT YES IF REQUEST MADE BY RESPONDENT EARLIER IN INTERVIEW**

Yes	1	
No	2	

IF EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS INFORMATION REQUESTED (L7/1)

READ OUT:

**O8 If you would like information regarding employment rights you can either go to the ACAS website – [www.acas.org.uk](http://www.acas.org.uk), or contact them by telephone on 0300 123 1100 (Monday to Friday, 8am to 8pm or Saturday, 9am to 1pm).**

Finally I would just like to confirm that this survey has been carried out under IFF instructions and within the rules of the MRS Code of Conduct.

**INTERVIEWER – PLEASE OFFER**

- MRS Freephone number to check validity of the research
- IFF telephone number to speak to research
- Thank you very much for your help today.

**THANK RESPONDENT AND CLOSE INTERVIEW**



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