

# MATERNITY LEAVE

Use this Checklist to familiarise yourself with what to do before, during and after maternity leave.

## Before Maternity Leave

- Familiarise yourself with your maternity entitlements through the [DCU Maternity Leave Policy](#).
- Decide if you would like to make contact with a [Maternity Buddy](#).
- Advise your Manager/Head of School of your intention to avail of maternity leave as soon as you are ready to do so but not later than 4 weeks before the commencement of your leave.
- Give advance notice to your manager of the dates and times of your pre-natal appointments.
- Ensure that all necessary [documentation](#) is completed and submitted to HR and the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection after 24 weeks of pregnancy but at least 6 weeks before you plan to commence your maternity leave.
- Complete a [Pregnancy Risk Assessment](#) in conjunction with the DCU Health and Safety Department.
- It is recommended that you discuss the following with your manager prior to commencing maternity leave:
  - The level of communication that you would like to maintain with your manager during your leave, if any.
  - Any plans that you may have to avail of optional Keep in Touch (KIT) days during your maternity leave and what you might use them for.
  - Arrangements for appropriate handover of duties prior to departure.

## During Maternity Leave

- Keep a record of any KIT days used as they can be claimed as days off in lieu (through Core) on your return to work.

- In order to avail of 16 weeks' unpaid leave you must must notify your Head of School/Unit and HR at least 4 weeks before your paid maternity leave is due to end. The unpaid additional maternity leave must be taken immediately following normal paid maternity leave.
- If you wish to avail of the Teaching Free Period during the first semester following your maternity leave you must advise your manager at least 6 weeks before you are due back from maternity to allow for appropriate cover to be extended/arranged.
- Give notice of the date of your return to work to HR at least 4 weeks before the date of return.
- Keep in touch with your [Maternity Buddy](#) throughout your maternity leave if you wish. A buddy can be particularly helpful as you approach your return to work date when you are likely to be making childcare plans and preparing to balance career and family commitments. This can prove to be a stressful transition and you are encouraged to use all the supports available to you.

## After Maternity Leave

- Maintain contact with your Maternity Buddy if required (until 6 months after your return to work).
- Meet with your manager to discuss any new developments, current priorities, work/career goals for the coming months and any supports that you might need to avail of.
- Remember that further support is available through the [DCU Employee Assistance Programme](#) both for you and immediate members of your family.
- Request to attend the [Returning to Work After Extended Leave Workshop](#), facilitated by Learning and Development.
- If you availed of any KIT days during your maternity leave remember to request the appropriate number of days off in lieu through Core.

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