

## How to walk the Labyrinth.

- Walk with an open Heart and an open mind.
- Have no expectations experience the experience
- Simply place one foot in front of the other.
- Walk at your own natural pace.
- Take a few deep breaths and centre your body.
- Quiet your mind.
- If this is the first time simply open to your own experience.
- If you have walked before you may want to set an intention or ask a question.

### The Labyrinth is walked in 3 stages.

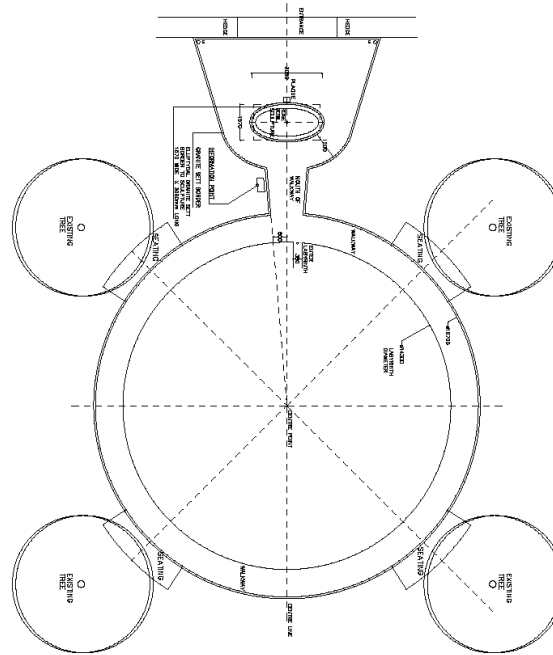
**Release** - walking into the labyrinth. Letting go of details, distractions and thoughts that occur along the way.

**Receive** - reaching the centre. When you reach the centre, stay as long as you like. Sit or stand. It is a place of meditation and prayer.

**Return** - re-connecting with the world. When you leave the centre and walk the same path a strange sense of strengthening may occur. You bring back out to the world that which you have received.



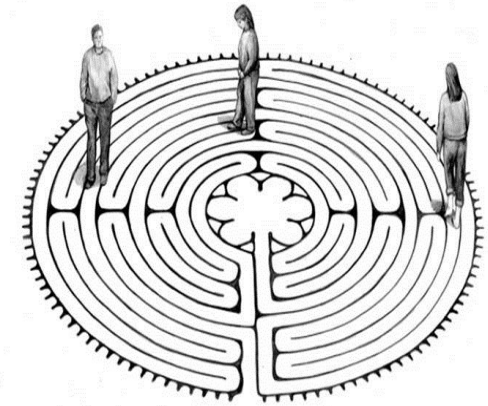
Labyrinth Garden  
University of Edinburgh



*DCU Labyrinth Plan*



## DCU Labyrinth Project



*"This is what God asks of you,  
only this, to act justly, to love  
tenderly and to walk humbly  
with your God."*

*Micah 6:8*

Over the last decade or so the number of labyrinths being built across the globe has expanded rapidly. The history of the labyrinth goes back almost 5,000 years. They seem to have emerged and re-emerged, capturing our interest in several time waves and in slightly different forms throughout this period.

### **What is a labyrinth?**

The labyrinth is an ancient pattern, an archetypal image that has been passed down through generations and cultures as a form of reflective instrument. Over the last thousand years or so these fascinating patterns have most often been constructed as pathways on the ground big enough for us to enter and walk. Many confuse the labyrinth with a maze. A maze has many paths, twists and turns and is a puzzle to be solved. A labyrinth has only one entrance and one path to the centre. The way in is the way out. Unlike a maze which is designed to get lost in, a labyrinth helps us find ourselves.

*“No one knows who created any of the labyrinth forms, but we do know from experience that embedded within each design is a pattern that somehow quiets our deep inner being so we can hear our own wisdom and the wisdom attempting to reach us. Whether walked or traced in sand, the labyrinth pattern is a powerful tool for reflection, meditation, realignment, and a deeper knowledge of the Self”.*  
*The Sand Labyrinth: Meditation at your Fingertips*  
*by Laren Artress.*

There are many different types of labyrinths around the world going back thousands of years and while they precede most world religions they are found in most religious traditions where they have been used as a method of meditation and reflection and as a metaphor for our life’s journey. One of the most famous models of labyrinth is to be found in the Cathedral of Chartres in France. The stone floor still bears its ancient floor labyrinth, laid there around the year 1201. It was used for walking contemplation by the Benedictine Monks and is still used for meditation by pilgrims today.

Slowly walking the single path, step by step, to the centre of the labyrinth, enjoying the space at the centre and then retracing the same path back out, gives enough time to unwind and let go of everyday concerns in order to renew some sense of inner calm, balance and perspective.

We all go through times of stress and difficulties in our lives. The labyrinth will be an important instrument that will support all who use it into the future and enable each of us to find a peaceful path in an environment that can be very stressful and demanding. When complete, the labyrinth will provide an area on campus that will assist all who use it to be more mindful and reflective. It will enable each of us to find that inner balance and peace that is very much needed in our busy world today.

Colleges throughout the world are using the labyrinth to enhance teaching and learning.  
*“In a culture that is predominantly book or computer based, the labyrinth offers a unique space in which students and staff may explore non-prescriptive experiential and participatory learning. Walking the path offers the possibility of a freeing up of creative blocks and of focusing attention on the more subtle insights that arise in our imagination.”*  
*Labyrinth, landscape of the soul by Di Williams*

