

Maternity/Adoption/Additional Paternity Leave – Guidance on Keeping in Touch Days

What are Keeping in Touch Days?

Staff on maternity, adoption or additional paternity leave may, by agreement with their Dean of School/Head of Office, undertake **up to ten days** work, referred to as 'Keeping in Touch Days (KIT days)'. This provision in the legislation aims to make things easier for both the organisation and the employee by easing the return to work and facilitating a smoother reintroduction to the team. This note clarifies key points about KIT days.

When can KIT days be taken?

Such days may be taken at any point during the maternity or adoption leave period except in the first two weeks after the baby is born. For paternity leave, the entitlement cannot start earlier than 20 weeks and the mother must have returned to work. KIT days do not need to be consecutive. KIT days do not extend the maternity, adoption or additional paternity leave period in any way as they form part of the whole maternity leave package and can only be taken during maternity/adoption leave. Before going on leave, managers and employees should also discuss any voluntary arrangements for keeping in touch

What sort of work can be undertaken?

The type of work undertaken is a matter of agreement between the member of staff and the Dean of School/Head of Office. The days may be used for any activity which would ordinarily be classed as work under the member of staff's contract, and could be particularly useful in enabling attendance at a conference, training activity, away day, Departmental meeting etc.

Children must not be brought into the office on any days that will be considered as KIT days. Staff will be responsible for meeting childcare costs on KIT days.

KIT days are intended to facilitate a smooth return to work for women returning from maternity, adoption or additional paternity leave. They should not be used to cover annual leave, sickness or staff shortages.

Are KIT days compulsory?

KIT days are optional and can only take place by agreement between both parties. The University may not require an employee to work during maternity/adoption leave. Similarly, an employee does not have the right to work KIT days if the Dean of School/Head of Office does not agree them.

How will staff be paid for KIT days?

Payment for KIT days will not exceed full pay. If a KIT day occurs during a period of full maternity/adoption pay then no additional payment will be made.

If a KIT day occurs during a period of SMP only, this will be “topped-up” so that the individual receives full pay for the half or full day worked.

In the case of additional paternity leave, any KIT day falling during a period of Additional Statutory Paternity Pay will be topped up to full pay.

If a KIT day occurs during an unpaid leave period, an employee will receive either a minimum of a half day’s pay at their normal hourly rate (if working up to 3.5 hours) or a full day’s pay if working up to 7 hours.

Any part of a day worked during the maternity/adoption leave period counts as a whole KIT day, up to the ten day maximum. For example, if an employee comes in for a one-hour training session and does no other work that day, she will have used one of her KIT days.

Managers are required to record KIT days and forward this information to Payroll on a monthly basis.

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