|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Title:** | Keeping in touch days (KIT) and Shared Parental Leave in touch days (SPLIT)  |
| **From:** | Human Resources  | **Date:** | 03/02/23 |

**Introduction**

There are 10 optional keeping in touch days available to staff on maternity or adoption leave (known as KIT days). Staff taking shared parental leave are also entitled to 20 keeping in touch days each (known as SPLIT days).

KIT and SPLIT days provide the opportunity for staff to undertake a limited amount of work and training without affecting their statutory pay. This may help ease an eventual return to work and benefit both parties.

For the purposes of this guidance any reference to keeping in touch days (KIT days) shall refer to both KIT and SPLIT days, unless stated otherwise.

**What arrangements do I need to make?**

It is good practice for managers to hold pre-maternity-leave interviews with employees to discuss matters such as the amount and type of contact that they would like during their leave and whether they want to undertake any work during their leave.

A manager may wish to make some provisional arrangements for work to be undertaken during the leave period, for example asking if the employee would like to come into work for specific meetings, or company events or training courses. Alternatively, keeping-in-touch days can be arranged at a later date, for example some days in the office could be agreed closer to the employee's return to work. Managers should seek to be flexible about the timing of KIT days, as the employee may need some flexibility to make suitable child care and travel arrangements.

An employer may need to consider what practical arrangements need to be made to enable an employee to work during their leave. For example, if maternity leave is being covered by a maternity locum, another workstation may be required.

Managers should check with their employee whether they will need access to breastfeeding/expressing facilities.

**How can I make good use of the employee’s time on a KIT day?**

In order for both parties to get the most out of a KIT day it is good practice to agree in advance how the employee’s time will be spent on the day. Keeping-in-touch days are useful for:

* Updating or refreshing the employee's knowledge and skills, if they are invited to training sessions and continuous professional development events;
* Engaging the employee in major organisational change discussions, if they are invited to meetings or other forums in which such issues are discussed;
* Finalising the employee's return-to-work plan;
* Ensuring that the employee is up to speed with any changes in standard operating procedures, policies and practices or new ways of working; and
* Maintaining or re-establishing the employee's relationships with key clients and colleagues

**Does an employee get paid for a KIT day?**

The relevant legislation does not specify how employers should deal with contractual pay for an employee who works a KIT day whilst receiving statutory pay. The University’s policy is as follows:

* If an employee is receiving full contractual maternity pay at the time they work a KIT day they will continue to receive their normal pay for that work – they will not receive any additional pay for the KIT day.
* If the employee is receiving statutory pay at the time they work a KIT day the University will top up their statutory pay so that the employee receives a normal day’s pay for the KIT day.
* If the employee is on unpaid maternity leave, they will receive their normal pay for the KIT day.

**How to request an employee is paid for a KIT da**y

To get paid for the KIT day, the line manager needs to complete the KIT days request form on [ServiceNow](https://sotonproduction.service-now.com/serviceportal?id=sc_cat_item&sys_id=d5e6dfce1bb1d91081f34157b04bcb47&sysparm_category=5633a73bdb91ef00f81bee71ca9619ad) to request the KIT is recorded on the HR system and the employee is paid accordingly. The line manager needs to provide the employee’s name, staff ID number and the dates of the day(s). The form should be completed after the employee has worked the day(s).

**When can an employee work a KIT day?**

KIT days can only be taken where both the employee and employer agree that it would be beneficial; neither party can insist that KIT days are worked. There are no restrictions on when KIT days can be used although maternity leave regulations prohibit any work for two weeks after childbirth. KIT days can be taken in a block or separately, as agreed between the employee and their manager.

**Can KIT days be taken as half days?**

In theory yes, but payment for the day is not pro-rated so the expectation is that the employee works their normal hours for the day. A partial KIT day worked still counts as one full day in terms of the total number of KIT days available to the employee.

**What happens if the employee works for more than ten KIT days?**

Once the employee has worked for more than the allotted entitlement to KIT days they will lose a week’s statutory pay for any week in which the employee does some work, even if it’s only for one day. For example, if a week contains the last of the ten KIT days and another (eleventh) day of work during their maternity leave, the employee will lose that week’s statutory pay. However, the employee is still entitled to their contractual pay for those KIT Days.

\*Note an employee who is entitled to maternity leave/adoption leave and shared parental leave is entitled to 30 days in total (10 KIT days + 20 SPLIT days), but can only work ten KIT days during their maternity/adoption leave and 20 SPLIT days during their shared parental leave.

**Are the number of KIT days pro-rated for part-time employees?**

The number of keeping in touch days available for part-time employees are not pro-rated. For example, an employee who normally works only a three day week is still entitled to ten keeping in touch days.