



Maternity Leave Checklist and Guidance

This checklist aims to support you in planning for your maternity leave. It is recommended that you arrange a meeting with your manager to run through each step and to plan accordingly.

Before Maternity Leave

- ✓ Read the University of Galway's [Maternity leave Policy](#). This provides an overview of the process, the provisions you may be entitled to and what will be required from both you and your manager at different stages of the process.
- ✓ Where an employee is medically certified as being absent from work due to pregnancy-related illness prior to going on maternity leave, the University's Sick Leave Policy will apply ([QA105 Sick Leave Policy](#)).
- ✓ Notify your line manager of your pregnancy as soon as reasonably possible. Discuss and agree the appropriate communication of your pregnancy with other colleagues in SBCS.
- ✓ With your line manager, you are advised to discuss any maternity cover that may be necessary during your absence in the first instance.
- ✓ Contact Dr Muriel Voisin, Chief Technical Officer for Health and Safety to complete a pregnancy related risk assessment.
- ✓ Complete your [Maternity Leave Application Form](#) and obtain your manager's signature. Submit this to the HR office. This must be completed at least 6 weeks before the commencement of maternity leave.
- ✓ Inform your line manager how you may wish to use your annual leave leading up to and/or following your leave period.

During Maternity Leave

- ✓ In the event of a prenatal or postnatal death of a child, bereavement leave may also be granted. Contact HR who will be able to give guidance to the [University's Bereavement Policy \(QA128\)](#).
- ✓ Maintain the agreed contact with your line manager.
- ✓ With your line manager, discuss and agree the plans for your return to work.
- ✓ Inform HR of additional unpaid leave at least 4 weeks before the 26 weeks of maternity leave expires.
- ✓ If considering flexible working arrangements following your return to work, please allow adequate time to discuss this with your line manager and submit the formal application prior to your return.

Returning to work

- ✓ Ensure you arrange a meeting with your line manager before your return to work to receive appropriate updates on new or amended systems of work, and any new members of staff or staff departures.
- ✓ Ensure arrangements and risk assessments are in place (if applicable).
- ✓ Arrange regular meetings with your line manager to discuss how your return is going.
- ✓ Consider the wide variety of free services available to University of Galway staff returning from maternity leave.
 - **Maternity Matters: Return to Work Training** - This is facilitated by an external trainer and generally runs in January and June each year. For more information, please contact
 - **Breastfeeding Group** - please contact oonagh.meade@universityofgalway.ie or rachel.hilliard@universityofgalway.ie for further information or to join the mailing list.
 - **Family-Friendly Facilities** - The Buildings and Estates Office have developed a [map of nursing and changing rooms](#) which may be useful.
 - **Research Grant for Returning Academic Carers** - The policy and application form are available on the OVPEDI policy webpage : [HERE](#)
 - **Employee Assistance Service** - The EAS is a free and confidential professional counselling and information service that provides support to University of Galway employees, their partners and dependents to resolve personal and work-related concerns. Further details are available [HERE](#).