



Exeter College

Sickness Absence Reporting and Sick Pay policy

1. Introduction

We will endeavour to be sympathetic to genuine cases of illness or other problems which might make absence unavoidable. However, excessive or unauthorised absence causes disruption to the business, lowers the morale of other staff and makes us less able to accommodate genuine cases of long-term illness. Therefore, all absences are taken seriously and unacceptable levels of sickness absence are likely to lead to disciplinary action.

This policy is not contractual but sets out the way in which the College plans to deal with absence from work. The College reserves the right to vary the procedures as appropriate, and to amend any benefits that may be mentioned.

2. Scope of this policy

This policy applies to all non-academic employees (including heads of department). It does not apply to those on fixed-term contracts, casual workers, agency workers or contractors.

The policy also only applies to absence caused by personal illness or accident, and not to the need to take time off because of the illness or accident of others (e.g. child, parent). Such absences will instead normally be covered by the provisions of the separate policies relating to parental leave, or time off to care for dependants.

3. Aims of this policy

This policy aims to minimise the disruption caused by employee absence by setting clear guidelines on absence notification, by encouraging regular communication to assist employees to return to work as soon and as safely as possible, and by assisting managers to handle absences due to illness or injury in a fair, consistent and effective way.

4. Legal considerations

The following legislation applies to this policy:

- the Access to Medical Reports Act 1988
- the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992 (as amended)
- the Employment Rights Act 1996
- the Data Protection Act 1998.

5. Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of our managers to perform return to work interviews with the employees who report to them, and to support individuals whilst they are off sick and also upon their return. In

This policy is non-contractual – it does not form part of your terms and conditions of employment.

Page 1 of 13	Version 2.1	Effective from 1 January 2016	Last reviewed October 2015
--------------	-------------	----------------------------------	-------------------------------

addition, managers are required to complete the correct paperwork and ensure that records are kept up to date in order to manage absence efficiently (whilst bearing in mind the requirements to comply with the Data Protection Act when handling confidential sensitive personal data). Managers are not expected to be medical professionals and if specialist advice or guidance is required to manage a case of absence, consent and permission to obtain this should be sought.

Our employees are responsible for following our absence notification procedures, and for informing us of any medical condition that may affect their ability to perform their role safely with us. We only encourage employees to return to work when they are fit to do so, for their own health benefits and also for those with whom they work. Absence should only occur, however, when an employee is genuinely ill and not for any reason other than the employee's own sickness. Other related policies cover different absence situations (please see below).

6. Illness during the working day

An employee who is unable to complete a shift due to illness, or for any other reason, should notify his/her supervisor/manager prior to leaving site. He/she must sign out of the site using the appropriate method for his/her work area (e.g. attendance log). If the employee is unable to return to work the following day, he/she must follow the absence notification procedure set out below.

7. Sickness Absence notification

An employee who is unable to attend work for any reason must:

- contact their manager as soon as possible, but in any event within one hour of his/her normal start time on his/her first day of absence. This notification should be by phone, and the employee should personally speak to their manager. Please note that we do not consider text messages to be an acceptable form of contact.

An employee who is unable to notify us personally should ensure that a relative, neighbour or friend contacts us. If the manager is unavailable, the employee or his/her nominated representative should instead notify the HR Officer or another senior member of staff.

Wherever possible, employees who regularly use email as part of their daily work should set their email account to 'Out of Office', using Outlook Web Access (<https://nexus.ox.ac.uk>). Full instructions are available from the Computing Department.

- give as much notice of their absence as practically possible. In addition, the reason for the absence and an indication of its likely duration should be provided. The reason for the absence will, as far as is practicable, be kept confidential if this is requested.
- if appropriate, give details of any outstanding work that needs to be dealt with during their absence.
- confirm details of how they can be contacted during their absence (particularly if they will be away from home). We may contact them during a period of absence and, in addition, may visit them at home to discuss their health and progress towards returning to work. See below (absence whilst on holiday) regarding sickness whilst absent from work on authorised holiday, or just prior to taking authorised holiday.

Absent employees are then responsible for keeping their manager informed of their situation on a regular basis. They should remain in contact with us, and if away from home at any time during their absence, should provide us with full contact details.

This policy is non-contractual – it does not form part of your terms and conditions of employment.

Page 2 of 13	Version 2.1	Effective from 1 January 2016	Last reviewed October 2015
--------------	-------------	----------------------------------	-------------------------------

- remain in regular contact with their manager during their absence, in accordance with reporting timescales set by the manager (and up to daily, for short-term absences).
- immediately upon return to work after any period of sickness absence all employees are required to complete a self-certification of absence form covering the complete period of absence, irrespective of whether a Statement of Fitness for Work was submitted. The Head of Department will discuss the details with the employee and will counter-sign the form (provided the information provided is satisfactory) indicating whether or not payment is to be made for the period of absence. This form will then be retained on the employee's personnel file, and a copy sent to the Accounts Department if there are payment implications.
- if absent through sickness or injury for more than one week, obtain a Statement of Fitness for Work from a doctor and forward it to their manager. The name of the doctor, the surgery and its contact information should be clearly stated. Sick pay will not normally be paid for any absences that are due to reasons other than the employee's own illness.

If a period of medically certified absence is extended by a further Statement (or alternatively, a Return to Work plan issued by the Fit for Work service), the employee's manager must be informed on the same day and advised of the extension of the absence. Statements of Fitness for Work should then continue to be sent on a regular basis until such time as the employee is able to return to work. This applies even where any entitlement to sick pay is exhausted.

If a Statement of Fitness for Work (or alternatively, a Return to Work plan issued by the Fit for Work service) indicates that the employee is unable to undertake the full duties of his/her normal job, but may be able to do some work (either on reduced hours, or with revised duties), we will discuss this with him/her and consider any recommendations or suggestions made by the GP which may facilitate an earlier return to work.

If therapeutic work is recommended, we should be informed and we will take any appropriate steps to provide this ourselves, if practicable. However, if appropriate measures cannot be taken for any reason, the employee will remain on sick leave until such time as he/she is able to return to his/her full duties. Employees shall not normally return to work during the period covered by a Statement of Fitness for Work, unless the doctor has recommended a phased return and the College will set a date to review the situation further.

Whilst absent from work due to illness or injury, employees must not take on any other work, either paid or unpaid, without our consent, irrespective of whether sick pay is still being paid. Employees remain bound by all of the terms and conditions of their contracts of employment. Whilst absent from work due to illness or injury, employees are expected to remain resting at home, unless specifically advised otherwise by their GP or other qualified medical advisor, and to refrain from any strenuous activity or activity that a reasonable person or healthcare professional would consider to be inconsistent with the reason for their absence. They are also expected to comply with the advice given by their GP or healthcare professional.

Failure to comply with the above procedures could affect any entitlement to sick pay and, in some instances, could warrant disciplinary action.

8. Accidents whilst at work

The details of any absence that is related in any way to an accident at work must be recorded in our accident book, and the Health and Safety Assistant notified.

This policy is non-contractual – it does not form part of your terms and conditions of employment.

Page 3 of 13	Version 2.1	Effective from 1 January 2016	Last reviewed October 2015
--------------	-------------	----------------------------------	-------------------------------

9. Fitness to return to work

Employees shall not normally return to work during the period covered by a doctor's certificate, unless the doctor has recommended a phased return to work on the Statement of Fitness for Work.

Where an employee wishes to return to work but the College has concerns about their fitness to do so, we reserve the right to send them home from work and/ or require them to remain on sick leave. The College also reserves the right to ask an employee to get an amended Statement of Fitness for Work document from their GP, confirming an earlier return to work date.

If a phased return to work has been agreed, payment will depend on the circumstances and the duration of the part-time working arrangement. If contractual sick pay is exhausted, the employee will normally be paid for any actual hours worked, at his/her normal basic hourly rate, during a phased return (subject to earning at least the rate of SSP where there is an entitlement to this).

If contractual sick pay is not exhausted, this will continue to be paid and the shortfall between worked hours and normal working hours will be deducted from the sick pay entitlement.

If the employee is being paid SSP only, this will be the minimum rate of pay whilst on a phased return to work programme, unless SSP is exhausted, in which case payment will only be made for the actual hours worked.

Hours worked as part of a phased return to work will be paid as normal, but hours not worked will be counted as sickness absence.

An employee who wishes to continue with the reduced or revised hours indefinitely should ask the Head of Department to consider a permanent change to the contract of employment and we will discuss the implications of this with him/her.

10. Return to work interviews

It is our policy that, as far as is practicable, all employees are seen informally by their line manager, as soon as possible after their return to work. The reasons for the absence will be discussed in appropriate detail depending on the nature and frequency of the absence(s).

The meeting may, as appropriate, also provide an opportunity to brief the employee on any developments in his/her area of work which occurred during the absence. The manager will discuss the workload and how best to minimise any disruption that may have been caused by the absence. He or she will also need to know whether the employee is fully fit to return or should refrain from any tasks for health reasons.

An employee who, for whatever reason, finds it difficult to discuss the reasons for absence with his/her Head of Department, or who prefers to speak to another Head of Department of the same sex, should ask for this and we will make every effort to comply.

11. Unauthorised absence

If an employee is absent from work without prior notification, we will attempt to contact that person to establish the reason for absence. If we are unable to contact the employee, the following procedure will normally apply:

- A letter will be sent to the last known address, requesting the employee to contact us immediately to provide an explanation of his/her absence and the date of likely return;
- If the individual fails to contact us, pay will be stopped with effect from the first day of absence from work;

This policy is non-contractual – it does not form part of your terms and conditions of employment.

Page 4 of 13	Version 2.1	Effective from 1 January 2016	Last reviewed October 2015
--------------	-------------	----------------------------------	-------------------------------

- Failure to provide an explanation for absence may result in disciplinary action, which could ultimately end in dismissal.

12. Medical reports

We reserve the right, at any time during employment, to require an employee to attend an independent medical examination, or to ask permission to contact his/her doctor or consultant for a report.

Prior written consent will be requested before we approach any doctor or consultant who is treating the employee, and full details will be provided of the employee's rights and obligations under the Access to Medical Reports Act.

We would normally request such a report in the following circumstances:

- where an employee complains of an ongoing health problem which is affecting his/her ability to do his/her job;
- where an employee claims that any aspect of his/her job is creating a health problem;
- where the absence gives us cause for concern;
- where an employee has been absent for some time and there is doubt about when he/she may be able to return to work.

In addition, or as an alternative, once an employee has been absent for four weeks or more, we may suggest that a referral is made to the Fit for Work scheme (see below). Participation in this scheme is voluntary, but since it is designed to assist employees by providing advice and support to return to work, we would encourage employees to fully engage with this.

We may also request a medical report if we are considering dismissal for either a long-term health problem or unsatisfactory attendance made up of repeated short absences. In addition, if an employee has any health condition that could be considered a disability we would wish to seek a report in order to obtain guidance on what, if any, reasonable adjustments should be made to enable the employee to perform his/her duties satisfactorily.

Employees are required to co-operate with our procedures, including providing medical advice and ensuring we are kept informed of any developments in their treatment or condition.

In addition to the above, the University of Oxford has contracted occupational health advisors whom we may ask to advise us generally, and also to assist with the rehabilitation of those returning after lengthy absences or following serious illness or injury.

Our standard employment contracts contain a clause requiring that employees co-operate with us by attending any occupational health assessments organised for them. Failure or refusal to do so would be a breach of contract and could also lead to any contractual sick pay being withdrawn, and/ or disciplinary action being taken.

13. Sick pay and benefits

Contractual sick pay will normally be paid for absences owing to illness or accident, up to a maximum period as follows:

Service (as at first day of absence)	Full pay	Half pay
First 6 months service	SSP	

This policy is non-contractual – it does not form part of your terms and conditions of employment.

6 months to 1 year's service	2 weeks	2 weeks
During 2 nd year of service	2 months	2 months
During 3 rd year of service	3 months	3 months
During 4 th and 5 th year of service	5 months	5 months
During 6 th year of service and beyond	6 months	6 months

In exceptional circumstances, Staff Committee may recommend to Governing Body that these periods be extended. This maximum entitlement will normally apply irrespective of the reason for the illness or accident (including if the absence is due to any injury caused by an accident at work or is related to the type of work done by the employee).

Any contractual sick pay will include any Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) payable for that period, as appropriate. The maximum period of entitlement (which may be made up of one or more periods of absence) will be calculated on a rolling 12-month basis. The entitlement to sick pay will be calculated as at the first date of absence in the current absence period, less any sick pay paid in the twelve month period prior to that date. For clarification, once the total maximum entitlement has been exhausted, it will not be recalculated during the current absence, irrespective of its duration or irrespective of any increased length of service

Employees who exhaust their entitlement to contractual sick pay may still be entitled to receive SSP (see below).

Sick pay for part-time or fixed-term employees will be applied on a pro-rata basis.

The Governing Body reserves the right to discontinue, reduce or re-claim the discretionary element of payments made under this scheme if:

- following a disciplinary investigation, it is found that the terms of the scheme have been abused;
- we have good reason to believe that sickness is not genuine;
- notification of absence is provided later than the end of the first qualifying day of absence.
- the employee fails to report the reason for their absence;
- the employee fails to maintain regular contact;
- there are repeated instances of short-term absence (where there appears to be no underlying medical reason for these);
- the employee fails to attend an occupational health appointment, if this is requested.
- the employee fails to cooperate with any referral to the Fit for Work service, or to share a Return to Work plan with us, or to comply with the recommendations of a Fit to Work plan;
- the illness or injury was sustained as a result of sporting or leisure activities, or is due to sunburn, or to alcohol/ drug consumption
- where the time off is to undertake surgical or non-surgical procedures that are concerned solely with the enhancement of physical appearance or any illness resulting from complications following this.

Contractual sick pay will not normally be paid during any notice period (irrespective of whether the notice is given by the employee or by us) nor during any absence due to sickness during the course of disciplinary proceedings against the employee or during investigations into alleged breaches by the employee of our rules, procedures or contractual obligations.

This policy is non-contractual – it does not form part of your terms and conditions of employment.

Page 6 of 13	Version 2.1	Effective from 1 January 2016	Last reviewed October 2015
--------------	-------------	----------------------------------	-------------------------------

The entitlement to contractual sick pay may also be affected if notification of absence is later than the end of the first qualifying day of absence.

In the event of the self-certification of absence form not being countersigned by a Head of Department, line manager or another senior member of staff, the absence will be treated as unauthorised and payment of contractual sick pay will be withheld. An employee who feels that his/her payment has been unfairly withheld should use our grievance procedure.

Any benefits under the contract of employment will normally continue to be provided during any period of absence lasting less than 13 weeks. Where these are benefits in kind offered while you are on duty (e.g. meals), you will not be entitled to receive any financial compensation for the loss while you are absent from work and unable to avail yourself of them.

Statutory leave will continue to accrue during periods of long-term sick. Contractual leave in excess of this will cease to accrue after 8 weeks' absence and will only start to accrue again on return to work.

If the employee's absence from work is (or appears to have been) caused by the negligence of a third party in respect of which damages are (or may be) recoverable, he/she should use all reasonable endeavours to recover damages from the third party. Should the damages exceed the cost of recovery, the employee will be required to refund to us the part of any damages recovered which relates to sick pay paid during that period of absence.

14. Statutory Sick Pay (SSP)

Employees are entitled to SSP provided they meet the eligibility criteria. They cannot get SSP if they are not sick for four or more days in a row as this does not form a "period of incapacity for work" (PIW). The following categories of employee are excluded from receiving SSP, if:

- their average weekly earnings are less than the lower earnings limit for National Insurance contributions;
- they have already had 28 weeks' worth of SSP from us and this new spell of sickness links to the last one;
- they were not entitled to SSP the last time he/she was sick, for any reason, and this spell of sickness links to that one;
- they started or returned to work after getting Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) from the Job Centre Plus and are a 'benefit recipient' who is sick within the first 104 weeks of starting, or returning to, work for us;
- they had a series of linked PIWs lasting more than three years;
- they have not done any work for us under their contract of employment;
- they are away sick during a stoppage of work due to a trade dispute which started before the first day of sickness, unless they have not taken part in the trade dispute and have no direct interest in it;
- they are pregnant and the absence is either wholly or partly because of the pregnancy, and it occurs during the qualifying period for Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) which commences with:
 - the beginning of the week they are first entitled to SMP or the fourth week before their expected week of confinement; or
 - the beginning of the week they are first entitled to Maternity Allowance (MA) from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP); or
 - the beginning of the fourth week before their expected week of confinement if they cannot get SMP or MA.

This policy is non-contractual – it does not form part of your terms and conditions of employment.

Page 7 of 13	Version 2.1	Effective from 1 January 2016	Last reviewed October 2015
--------------	-------------	----------------------------------	-------------------------------

- they are outside the EU and we are not liable to pay employer's Class 1 NICs, even if their earnings are high enough;
- they are in legal custody.

15. Qualifying days for SSP

Unless otherwise specified in the employee's contract of employment, the days on which he/she would normally have worked had he/she not fallen sick will be identified as his/her qualifying days for SSP.

16. Waiting days

Employees are eligible for SSP on the fourth qualifying day in a 'period of incapacity for work' (PIW). The first three qualifying days are known as 'waiting days', and there is no entitlement to SSP for these days.

17. Linked periods of absence

Two or more continuous spells of sickness both lasting at least four days, which are separated by 56 calendar days or less, are linked together and counted as one. This means that an employee who has already had three waiting days in a period of incapacity, and then has a second linked spell within 56 days, will be paid SSP from the first qualifying day in the second spell.

18. Duration of payment

Provided the eligibility criteria are met, SSP is payable for up to 28 weeks of sickness absence in either:

- one period of incapacity for work, or
- any number of periods linked by 56 calendar days (eight weeks) or less. These cannot extend for more than three years.

19. Amount of SSP

The Government fixes the rate of SSP, which is normally reviewed annually. To be entitled to SSP the employee must earn at least the equivalent of Class One National Insurance Lower Earnings limit. SSP is subject to Income Tax and National Insurance deductions. The amount of SSP will be shown on the employee's payslip.

20. Maternity and sickness

Any sickness absence related to pregnancy will be recorded in the same way as any other sickness absence; however, it will not normally be counted when reviewing absence rates as part of a disciplinary procedure.

Employees should be aware that their maternity leave will start automatically if they are absent from work, due to a pregnancy-related illness, during the four weeks before the start of their expected week of childbirth, regardless of when they have said that they actually want their maternity leave to start. Further information is available from the HR Officer about this.

21. Absence whilst on holiday

An employee who falls sick (such that they would be unfit for work) either prior to commencing planned holiday absence, or during a period of paid holiday, and would otherwise be unable to take his/her statutory holiday entitlement under the Working Time Regulations in this holiday year

This policy is non-contractual – it does not form part of your terms and conditions of employment.

Page 8 of 13	Version 2.1	Effective from 1 January 2016	Last reviewed October 2015
--------------	-------------	----------------------------------	-------------------------------

(including any bank/public/bank holidays taken as paid holiday), may request that the period of illness during the authorised holiday is converted to sick leave and the holiday taken at a later date.

In this case, the employee is required to contact their Head of Department by telephone on each day of the illness to confirm that he/she is ill and, if entitled to contractual sick pay during this period, provide a medical certificate covering the total period of the absence.

Note that self-certification may suffice for SSP but is not regarded as sufficient for the payment of contractual sick pay whilst absent on pre-authorised holiday.

An employee who falls sick on a working day directly before or after a bank or public holiday, or directly following absence for authorised holiday may be required to produce a medical certificate in order to qualify for contractual sick pay.

22. Time off for medical and dental appointments (excluding hospital appointments)

Wherever possible, and in order to minimise disruption, employees are asked to make medical and dental appointments either outside of normal working hours, or at the beginning or end of the working day, or on a day of the week when their workload tends to be quieter. However, we do realise that this may not always be possible, particularly with hospital appointments.

Employees who need to take time off to attend a medical or dental appointment should notify their Head of Department, giving as much notice as possible. Such time off will normally be paid but we do request that the time is made up. The manager may, at his/her discretion, require the employee to produce an appointment card. We reserve the right to ask an employee to reschedule a routine appointment if its timing would cause disruption to the running of the particular department, or the completion of vital or urgent work.

Employees who have an appointment which is not at the end of the working day will normally be expected to return to work following the appointment. Any employee who requests or takes time off work for a medical or similar appointment when such an appointment has not in fact been made; who deliberately arranges appointments at times that are clearly inconvenient for us to accommodate; or who fails to give reasonable notice of a pre-scheduled appointment, will be subjected to disciplinary action under our disciplinary procedure. Please note that different rules apply to time off for ante-natal appointments – see our maternity, adoption, paternity and shared parental leave policy, a copy of which is available from the HR Officer.

23. Hospital appointments

Where it is necessary for a member of staff to visit a hospital for a one-off consultation, and it is not possible to do so outside working hours, this may be authorised as time off with pay (i.e. not as sickness absence). Evidence of the appointment may be required. If the employee is required to visit hospital for a course of treatment or therapy, this will normally be counted as sickness absence.

Where a stay in hospital is necessary, or where an employee needs to attend hospital on a regular basis for ongoing treatment, this will be recorded as sickness absence.

24. Sickness absence management

Managers, in conjunction with HR, will regularly review sickness absence to check for patterns that give cause for concern or indicate the possibility of health problems that may be exacerbated by an individual's working environment or arrangements. Where there is cause for concern it may be decided that further action is required.

The procedures outlined below, and the triggers for them, explain the College's normal approach to managing sickness absence. However, as each case of sickness absence will vary, the College will adopt

This policy is non-contractual – it does not form part of your terms and conditions of employment.

Page 9 of 13	Version 2.1	Effective from 1 January 2016	Last reviewed October 2015
--------------	-------------	----------------------------------	-------------------------------

such triggers and follow such procedures as it considers to be reasonable, taking into account the specific facts of the case, and the College reserves the right to depart from the triggers and procedures outlined below where, in its absolute discretion, it considers it appropriate to do so. This may particularly be the case with employees who have less than two years' service with the College.

In cases where it appears that an alternative procedure may be relevant, for example, because there are concerns about performance or conduct and not just attendance, it would be for the College to decide on the appropriate procedure to be followed. In each case we will notify an employee of the steps we consider to be appropriate.

25. Excessive absenteeism

Informal process

Employees who have a number of short absences that together comprise an unacceptable overall level of absence will be seen by their manager to discuss the frequency and reasons for these absences. This will normally be done on an informal basis initially, and will apply irrespective of whether the absences are believed to be genuine or not.

At the informal sickness review meeting, the manager will explain what the College considers to be an "acceptable" level of attendance. What is "acceptable" may be different depending on the nature of the work, the ability of the department to provide cover, the employee's length of service, previous absence history, the reasons given for the absences, and the treatment of other employees in similar situations.

The HR Officer may be present at this meeting, as appropriate.

Following the meeting, the manager may confirm the outcome in writing, including any improvement that is required and over what time period. Each case will be reviewed on its individual circumstances and the outcome of the informal sickness absence review meeting and any sanctions or requirements will be decided at the discretion of the College.

Formal process

If, following an informal sickness absence review meeting, an improvement in an employee's attendance is required but not achieved, a formal sickness absence review meeting may be held. This will be done in accordance with our disciplinary procedure, on grounds of unsatisfactory attendance.

Following each formal meeting, the employee will be informed of the manager's decision, including any warning issued and any further requirements for improvement going forwards. The employee will also normally be informed of the potential consequences of a failure to improve.

If, despite warnings, attendance remains unsatisfactory, this may result in dismissal. Prior to dismissal, the employee will be invited to attend a formal meeting to discuss his/her attendance. He/she may be accompanied at this meeting by a colleague or a trade union representative. The reasons for the absence, and the individual's overall level of attendance, will be fully discussed. If a decision is taken to give a warning or to dismiss, this will be confirmed in writing, together with details of any right of appeal and our appeals procedure. For further details, please refer to the disciplinary procedure

26. Long-term sickness

Once an employee has been absent from work for four consecutive weeks, his/her GP may refer him/her to the Fit for Work service. This service is designed to assist the employee in overcoming any barriers to returning to work, and to provide case management for those who have complex needs and require ongoing support. Use of the service is voluntary but we encourage employees to participate, especially since if an employee fails to engage with the service, no further fit notes will be issued.

Employees should also note that contractual sick pay may be withheld from employees who fail to cooperate with any referral to the Fit for Work service, to share the contents of the Return to Work plan with us, or to comply with its recommendations.

Otherwise, we will normally make arrangements to informally see employees who are absent from work for a period in excess of 8 weeks. This may be either at work or at their home, to update ourselves on their progress and to ask for permission to obtain a doctor's or consultant's report. Employees may refuse their permission, but it should be emphasised that the request is made to help us manage the situation and it will usually be to their advantage to enable us to get further information about their likely date of return to work, whether any medical restrictions should be placed on their activities, and whether they have any condition which may be classed as a disability.

We will aim to inform an employee who is about to exhaust his/her entitlement to either SSP or contractual sick pay of this. Note that an employee who has exhausted his/her sick pay is still required to comply with our absence notification procedure and to send in Statements of Fitness for Work to cover his/her absence.

Employees may, if they choose, request to take some annual leave during periods of sickness absence, or prior to returning to work. An employee who is on sick leave may also choose to cancel any pre-arranged holiday that would otherwise coincide with his/her sick leave, but should notify his/her manager as soon as possible of any such request.

Employees who are unable to take at least their basic four weeks' statutory holiday entitlement during our holiday year (including any bank/public holidays taken as paid leave) may carry the shortfall forward into the next holiday year, but should use this within three months of their return to work; any annual leave not taken within 15 months of the end of the holiday year in which it accrues (whether or not the employee has returned to work) will normally be lost. Statutory leave will continue to accrue during periods of long-term sickness absence. After 8 weeks' absence, contractual leave in excess of the statutory leave will cease to accrue and will only start to accrue again on return to work.

If the absence continues at a level that we deem unacceptable, or if it becomes evident that there is little likelihood of a return to work, we will reassess the situation and may take a decision to dismiss on grounds of ill-health.

If dismissal is being considered, we will write to the employee, giving advance notice of a formal meeting to discuss the situation. The employee may, if he/she wishes, be accompanied at this meeting by a colleague or a trade union representative.

Before reaching a decision, we will take into account the nature of the illness, any advice we have received from a doctor, consultant or occupational health professional as to likely return to work and future capabilities, length of service, previous absence history and performance. If the absence is due to a reason related to a disability, we will also wish to explore any ways of accommodating this.

If a decision is taken to dismiss, this will be confirmed to you in writing, together with the details of any right of appeal and our appeals procedure.

27. Health checks, concerns and contact with infectious and contagious diseases

All new employees are required to complete a pre-employment health questionnaire on accepting our offer of employment and prior to starting work for us. This is aimed at identifying any areas of concern, medical conditions, etc.

If, at any time during employment an employee suspects that he/she may be suffering from, or who is diagnosed as suffering from, any condition which may affect his/her ability to do his/her job is required to notify their Head of Department in order that we may take all reasonable steps to ensure

This policy is non-contractual – it does not form part of your terms and conditions of employment.

Page 11 of 13	Version 2.1	Effective from 1 January 2016	Last reviewed October 2015
---------------	-------------	----------------------------------	-------------------------------

his/her well-being at work. This includes notifying us of any medication that the employee is taking which may affect his/her ability to work safely, or may cause drowsiness or fatigue, especially if his/her job involves working with machinery or driving.

Any employee who has been in contact with an infectious or contagious disease (including diphtheria, typhoid, paratyphoid, polio or tuberculosis), should report the fact immediately to their Head of Department and then obtain advice as to whether it is necessary to remain away from work. Such absence will be treated as paid sick leave.

An employee who has been in contact with measles, mumps, whooping cough, German measles (rubella) or chicken pox need not normally remain away from work.

28. Accidents at work

The details of any absence that is related in any way to an accident at work should be recorded in our accident book, and you should notify the Health and Safety Assistant.

29. Emergency time off for dependents

Our absence policy and payment schemes relate to absence due to our employees' own illness or injury, not that of other members of their family or dependants. Reasonable time off will be authorised to deal with the urgent unforeseen needs of a dependant, but this will normally be unpaid. For more details, see our policy on parental leave and/ or time off for dependants, a copy of which is available from the HR Officer.

30. Elective surgery

For the purposes of this policy, elective surgery is surgery that is those that are not considered to be medically necessary, or is for non-medical reasons. Examples might include vasectomies or the removal of bunions or moles. This provision is not intended to cover surgical or non-surgical procedures that are concerned solely with the enhancement of physical appearance (e.g. face lifts, breast enlargements, facial peels, teeth whitening, dental veneers etc) for which time away from work should be taken from holiday entitlement or as time off in lieu.

We accept that there may be circumstances where a manager wishes to exercise his/her discretion to allow time off for elective surgery, depending on the individual circumstances. The employee making the request should discuss the reason for the time off and the underlying circumstances with his/her manager who (at the College's sole discretion) may authorise up to one day's paid leave in any one year for an employee to undergo cosmetic interventions.

Alternatively, a manager may permit time off to be taken as annual leave, time off in lieu (TOIL) or unpaid leave.

An employee who wishes to take time off for elective surgery is required to:

- inform his/her manager as soon as the plans have been confirmed;
- provide a statement from a qualified medical practitioner that the elective surgery has been approved, and giving the likely duration of recovery;
- where possible, arrange for the elective surgery to take place at a time that will cause the minimum amount of inconvenience to the College; and
- provide as much notice as possible of the day(s) on which the elective surgery will take place.

Any information provided to the manager will be maintained in strict confidence. The reason for the employee's absence will be disclosed only on a "need-to-know" basis and in consultation with the employee.

This policy is non-contractual – it does not form part of your terms and conditions of employment.

Page 12 of 13	Version 2.1	Effective from 1 January 2016	Last reviewed October 2015
---------------	-------------	----------------------------------	-------------------------------

Where the outcome of the elective surgery is unexpected and the employee suffers an injury or illness, our standard sick pay provisions will apply, following receipt of the relevant sickness certificate.

31. Fertility treatment

Any employee who may need time off work to undergo fertility treatment, or because his/her partner is undergoing fertility treatment, should discuss this with his/her manager. Time off can be taken as annual leave or, alternatively, unpaid leave may be authorised or a form of temporary flexible working may be approved, subject to the needs of the College.

Any employee who may need such time off work should inform his/her manager as soon as the plans have been confirmed; provide a statement from a qualified medical practitioner that fertility treatment has been recommended and approved; and, if requested, produce an appointment card for each occasion on which time off is required. Where possible, appointments should be made for times that will cause the minimum disruption to the working day, and we do ask that the employee provides as much notice as possible of the days and times on which time off is required.

Any information provided to the manager will be maintained in strict confidence.

32. Absence records and monitoring

Details of an employee's health, either physical or mental, are categorised as "sensitive personal data" under the Data Protection Act. Health records are therefore kept in a locked filing cabinet in the HR Office.

A record for each employee is kept, detailing the number of days absent, dates and reasons given. These records are kept by the HR Officer. The employee and Head of Department or his/her manager may request to see the individual details at any time. The HR Officer should be given reasonable notice of their requirement, so that he or she can collate the records.

Our overall absence figures and the reasons for these will be reviewed and analysed by the HR Officer and Heads of Department on a regular basis to identify any trends or any areas of concern. Where areas of concern are highlighted, action will be taken to try to identify the causes and take appropriate action.

33. Monitoring and review of this policy

The Governing Body of the College has overall responsibility for implementing and monitoring this policy, which will be reviewed on a regular basis following its implementation and may be changed from time to time.

Any queries or comments about this policy should be addressed to the HR Officer.

34. Related policies

We also have the following related policies:

- Maternity, adoption and paternity leave, and shared parental leave
- Disciplinary policy
- Flexible working policy
- Parental leave policy
- Time Off to Care for Dependants policy

This policy is non-contractual – it does not form part of your terms and conditions of employment.

Page 13 of 13	Version 2.1	Effective from 1 January 2016	Last reviewed October 2015
---------------	-------------	----------------------------------	-------------------------------